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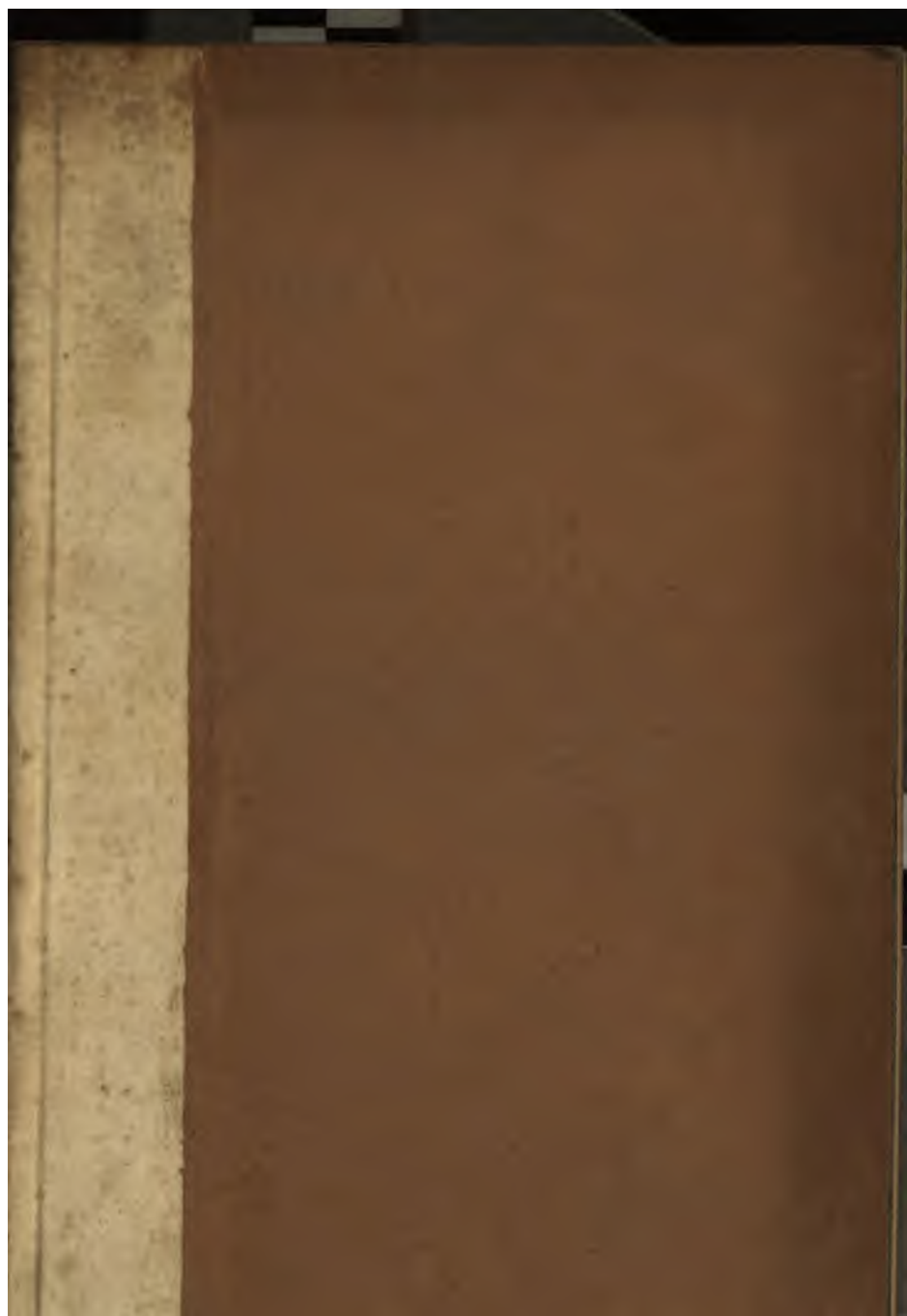
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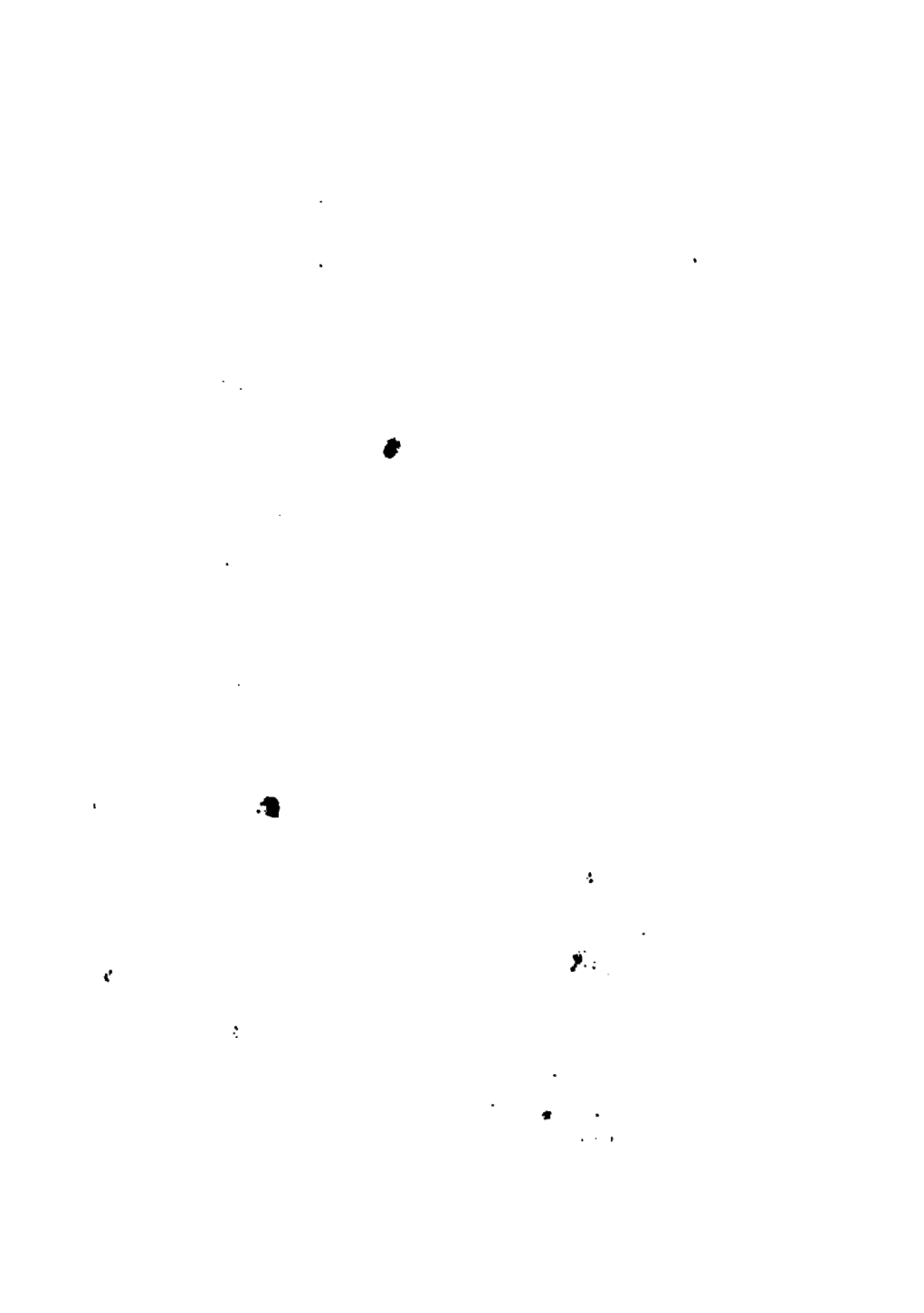
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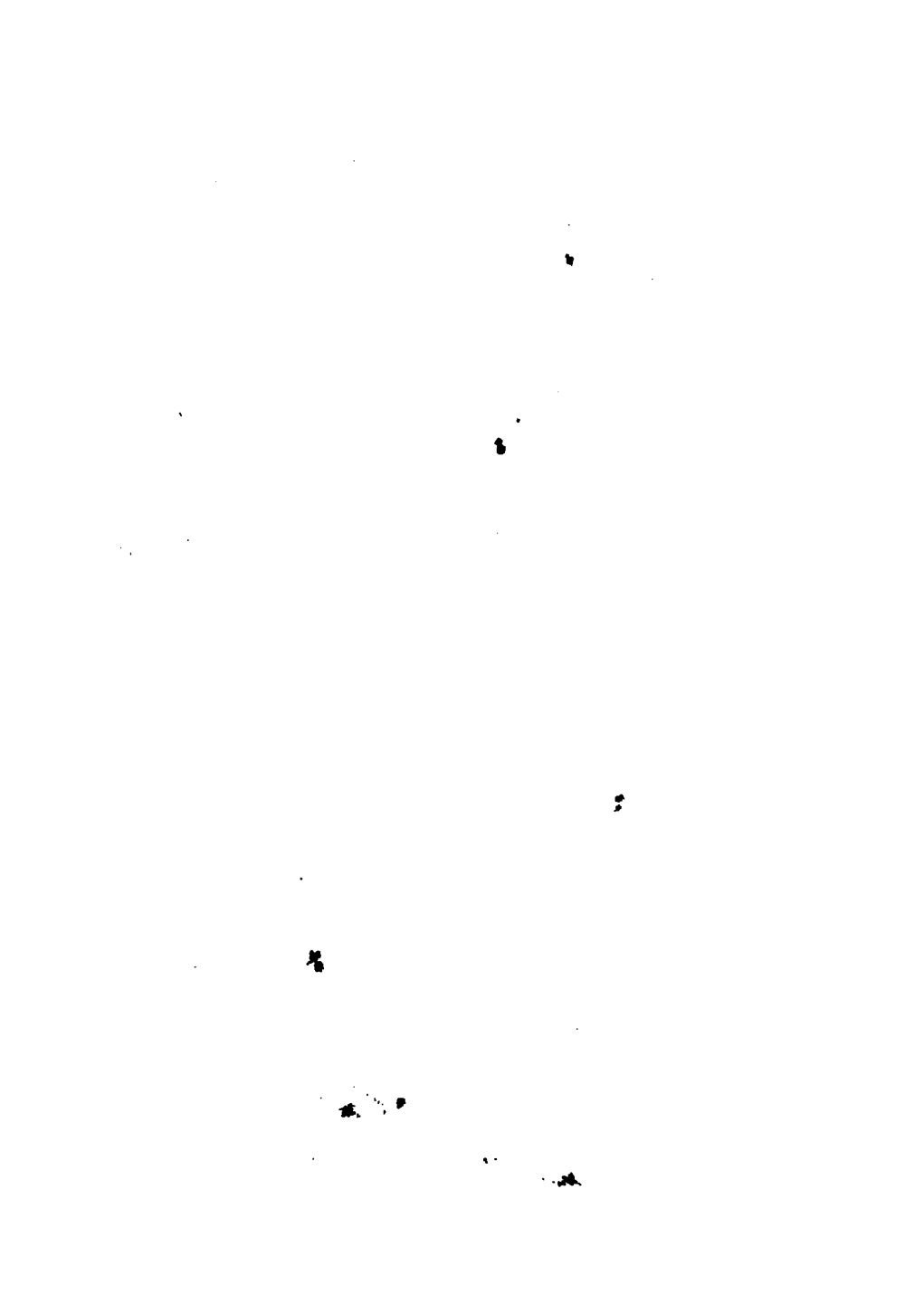
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AIDS TO THE DEVELOPMENT

OF THE

DIVINE LIFE.

BY THE

REV. J. BALDWIN BROWN, B.A.,

MINISTER OF CLAYLANDS CHAPEL, CLAPHAM.

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fellowship of suffering, of a very high order, if we are to realise in its fulness the possession of His glorious likeness in the day of the manifestation of the sons of God.

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October, 1861.

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REV. J. BALDWIN BROWN, B.A.

No. I.

THE
DECEASE ACCOMPLISHED AT JERUSALEM.

"For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come." 1 COR. xi, 26.

"DEATH the gate of life" — earth's outer, heaven's inner gate, is the key of all Christian teaching. Let a man master that thought in the school of Christ, and he has solved the problem of life, and forecast eternity. This is the grand result of the life and the death of the Lord. That which shows it forth most fully, which exhibits its complete symbols, is a "*showing forth of His death till He come.*" And that is the true showing forth of His life—that life to which death was no calamity, not even an accident, but a beneficent development; the shedding of a fleshly vesture, the revelation of a glorious man. "YE DO SHOW FORTH THE LORD'S DEATH TILL HE COME." What calm triumph, what assured hope is here. What transformation had passed in the belief of the apostolic band, since two of them trod sadly and wearily the path to Emmaus, discoursing tearfully of the decease which the Lord had accomplished at

Jerusalem, and of the hope they had buried in His tomb. Since that day, the risen Lord had lived with them awhile; and angels from heaven had announced His entrance into the world of glory which His death had opened, and prophesied His return to fulfil the promise which His resurrection had uttered to the world. And then the thought entered into the disciples' hearts, "He who was dead and is alive, is truly the living Lord." His death was the condition of the unfolding of His life as the second Adam. He LIVES now: it was but a death life once. Earth's life is but a gestation for all of us. That sorrowful shame-oppressed life was but His share, His lordly share, of the groaning and travailing of all things here; through death, even the death of the cross, He was born out of it to glory—through death we have to be new-born. Dimly the disciples saw it once, when they rained their tears on the new-made tomb. Paul with the rest had attained to a clearer vision; and as they gathered around the emblem which renewed the anguish of the saddest night of earth's sad history, they knew that they were showing forth a death which was the fountain of strong and glorious life to them, and to the redeemed through eternity.

The Lord's Supper is here spoken of, not as an ordinance for the private satisfaction and edification of the Christian, but as a solemn witness to himself and to the world: or rather, let me say, his private edification lies in his reception of this witness, in the discovery of all that it implies, and the making it known to men. It is not to nurse the sense of privilege, to realise that you belong to a class which has opportunities, advantages, and hopes which other classes cannot share; but to receive the vital influence of a deed which was done, a sacrifice which was offered, a decease which was accomplished, for the great human world, of which you are to offer, by the celebration of this ordinance, perpetual tokens to mankind. You show forth the *Lord's death*, and your own relation to it. "*I am not my own*

but bought with a price, and bound therefore to glorify God, both with my body and my spirit, which are His. 'I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me, and the life which I live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.'"

I. Let us consider the significance of the fact that the chief ordinance of Christianity, is the showing forth of a death—the death of the Lord Jesus—which therefore must lie very near the root of the relation which He sustains to the world.

And this appears to dispose of the idea which occupies a very prominent place in the theology of some Unitarian schools, that the life of the Lord Jesus, as the purest witness to God's truth and the realities of things, the most perfect pattern of holy living ever set before men, is the great feature of His work, the great source of His power: that His death was the great seal of His life's witness, a noble martyr's death—no more; to be remembered with sacred sorrow, to be commemorated with tender regret, but by no means to be put in comparison with His life as God's great witness to mankind. I believe that the question at issue between the two schools can only be settled on this ground. We may quote texts to each other for ever, without much impression on either side. The real question is, does the death or the life of the Lord, His sacrifice, or His example, contain the fuller measure of Divine teaching to the world. "*As often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till He come,*" seems to me to throw a very solemn light on this matter. The Roman Church keeps the festivals of the Annunciation and the Nativity. I am not here questioning the wisdom and beauty of the hallowed associations which the church universal has gathered around these and kindred seasons. I venture here no opinion as to whether our weakness needs such helps, or whether our strength can

dispense with them. The life of Christ is full of light to us. Every fact shines like a planet in the darkness of the moral firmament of our world. Each word of truth, deed of charity, miracle of mercy, season of suffering and consolation, is luminous. The light flows down from them and bathes with its soft lustre the track of man's spiritual progress through all the ages of time. We may honour the Christian fasts and festivals, while we dread and guard against the tendency of all elaborately organized churches to honour on a day what should be the light of all days, and to gather into an isolated celebration what should leaven our whole lives with joy and hope. But mark you—the church commemorates every sad or joyful event in the life of the Lord Jesus as a man among men; but the Lord Christ Himself, in the one commemorative feast which he ordained, bade commemorate His death. His wisdom fixed on the death as the central feature, to which, as it were, the life was satellite. If to His eye the facts and experiences of His life were as planets to earth's firmament, His death is its sun. It is strange and startling. The sunlight of earth's moral firmament a death! But we are bound to believe it, unless we can believe that He came to give not sunlight but darkness to mankind. If His death be the darkest fact in *His* history, a martyr's death—the extinction of a light which might have illumined, a fire which might have cherished and quickened the world, leaving to it only a memory, then the commemoration of it is the darkest thing in *our* history. But if we regard that death, not from the low standing ground and with the limited horizon which a child of earth can command, but from that point of view which the Saviour commanded, when He said, "*And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me,*" that death will be, not for what the sufferer endured, but for what the sufferer did by it, the very brightest and most glorious thing in the history of this universe, to remain the brightest

thing in universal history, through eternity. Then a flood of sunlight, such sunlight as gladdens the angels and the new Jerusalem on high, falls on earth's night, from this sole commemorative ordinance of the Saviour—"This do in remembrance of me." I seek to press home this conviction upon you, that our Lord in fixing on His death, as the theme of commemoration, did fix on that which He knew to be of deepest significance, and fullest of promise to mankind.

The image of the manger, the swaddling bands, and all the humble apparatus of the nativity, might as well have been the symbols selected—or the pillow on the ship's hard boards, ruffled by the insolent breeze and wet with the spray of the storm—or the coat that blind old Bartimæus cast aside when he came rushing to receive his eye-sight at the touch of the Lord—or the image of the stone that strong hands rent away from the closed sepulchre of Lazarus, when a voice, which pierced even the ear of death, and rang out its imperial summons in Hades, rose on the ear of the awe-struck listeners, and he that was dead came forth. But on none of these did our Lord fix the thought of His followers in the deepest hour of communion with them—His deepest hour of communion with man—but on the decease that He should accomplish at Jerusalem. "Luminous as is my life, my death is the true sunlight of the world." And to this agree all the Scriptures. They seem to me to miss all the deepest words and thoughts of Scripture, who cannot see that all things look on to and flow out of the death of the Lord Jesus. The deepest passages of the Old Testament concern themselves with it. His reign is spoken of as a reign which was to spring out of His death. Isaiah, in the fifty-third chapter, dwells wholly on this burden. Indeed, the testimonies of the Old Testament are thus summed up by an inspired writer (1 Pet. i, 10, 11):—"Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who pro-

phesied of the grace that should come unto you : Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow." Nay, the Lord Himself thus condenses them (Luke xxiv, 25-27) :—" Then He said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken : Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into His glory ? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself."

It is evident too, from His own words, that He looked forward to His death as something far other than a martyrdom ; the simple sealing of the testimony He had borne for God with His blood. To Him it was evidently the condition of His living relation with universal humanity—of the full efflux of His power ; it was the lifting of a veil which had hidden Him ; the bursting of a dam through which some emanation of His vital force had filtered, but which hindered the breaking forth of the full flood of quickening power which was in Him, on the world. Mark x, 37-40 ; John xii, 19-33 ; xiv, 1-7, 19-21, 25-31 ; xvi, 5-16, may be read profitably in this connection. Nor was the thought the Lord's alone, all heaven was charged with it. Moses and Elias, in their glorious forms on the mount of transfiguration, " spake of the decease which He should accomplish at Jerusalem." I thus maintain, from our Lord's whole teaching, that death to Him was more vital than life, that He knew His dying to be more effectual than His living to the salvation of the world ; and that in ordaining that His followers should show forth His death, He was directing their thoughts and affections to that which was the hidden germ of His and their glory. Paul knew it as the Master knew it, he had learnt it from Him :—" *I protest by your rejoicing which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die daily.*" "*That I may know Him,*

the power of His resurrection, the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death." "*Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.*"

Having established this fact, let us—

II. Inquire into its significance with regard to our Lord Himself, and His relation to mankind.

1. Can we see how His death and all to which it led is more vital, and more full of vital influence for man, than His life? I say His death, and all to which it led. It is not regarded here, and cannot be treated in this connection, in its isolation, as so much suffering, but it is connected with His present and His future; in showing forth His death, it is not only the departed, but the reigning and coming Saviour whom we commemorate; for in eating the bread and drinking the cup, ye do show the Lord's death till He come. I think that in order to get deeper into the truth of this, we must dwell more fully on a fact which I have already glanced at, that the risen Saviour is the true man Christ Jesus; just as the true life of the disciple of the Saviour is the buried life, the life "hid with Christ in God." I say the true man Christ Jesus, is the risen man—the man who has destroyed death, and brought life and immortality to light by His Gospel. The flesh of the Lord Jesus, the body made in the likeness of sinful flesh, was the "veil" of the man. A veil essential to His close personal communion with the flesh-veiled spirit whom we knew as "man," but a veil still, to be laid aside when the full God-manhhood should shine forth, not to man only, but to the whole universe of God. The form painted with such tender touch in the fifty-third of Isaiah, is not the essential form of the God-man, but the form of the suffering God-man—suffering through contact with a state which is not eternal in the universe, which he came to assert to be temporary, and to put finally away. Man

is not essentially a sinful sufferer. The essential man is in God's image. THE SON OF MAN was sinless. God made man upright like himself. The likeness of man, the sinner, which the Lord Christ assumed, was not essential to the God-manhood. It was essential only to the work of redemption which He came to achieve. The completing of that work, when he had once established the connection between Himself and sinful man, had laid hold on man by becoming bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh for a while, demanded the putting off of the vestment which was woeful and tear-stained, not through His sin, but through ours whose burden He bore, and demanded further the putting on the form of a glorified man, and wearing it king-like on His throne before His Father and all worlds. That, I again insist, is man's true image. The original man was sinless. The ideal man, that is the man who is God's idea of man embodied, is sinless and glorious. His dying was the mighty assertion of this. His life in death, beyond death, was the apocalypse of man. And through life He longed for that apocalypse. He watched and yearned for the day when He should show manhood, not sinless only, but glorious in its purity before man and God; when the fleshly vesture or mask of man, which in His brethren the devil had smirched and flawed, should be put off, and the new man, the Lord from Heaven, should be seen in all His celestial brightness and beauty, in all His Divine might and majesty, as the first fruits of the redeemed world. Resurrection is the destiny of man. Till risen he can never be complete. To rise again he must die. And the Lord died, knowing that death was part of resurrection, and that it was essentially glorious to those on the other side of the veil, though to those on this side it could not but seem sorrowful and dread. How could it be otherwise, when the gate, still closed, hid from every human eye the ineffable brightness of the world of glory that was beyond? Those who in the infancy

of the world saw the earth for the first time, settling into the barrenness and dreariness of winter, must have made their moan over it as did the disciples over the dead body of their Lord. But we look at it from the side of the spring sunlight and verdure, and to us winter is beautiful, for it bears the promise of the new year. "That be far from thee, Lord," said short-sighted man when he heard the tread of approaching death. "Why seek ye the living among the dead," said the watching angels; "He is not here, but risen." "He was dead, but He is alive again, He liveth for evermore." The Lord then bids us commemorate His death, because to Him it is a feature of His resurrection; as He would have us die to rise with Him in eternal glory. Hence the triumphant tone of the Apostle (1 Cor. xv, 12, 23.) "Ye do show the Lord's death till He come" to proclaim the resurrection of the world.

2. He will have us show forth His death because it is the essential condition of the accomplishment of His purpose for man; because, in a word, that grave was the womb and not the tomb of our eternal life. "He died for our sin; He was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification." (Compare Rom. xiv, 8, 9; vi, 1-5; 1 Thess. v, 9-11.) I am not proposing here to enter into any theological discussion as to the necessity of the death of Christ to make atonement for the sins of the world.* I only here insist on the fact of the necessity that He should die for man, "the just for the unjust, to bring us to God," and that His death is our life. (Rom. v, 5-11.) I believe that there is that in the relation of the death of the Lord Jesus to our life which is unfathomable. Parallel to the mystery of sin is the mystery of redemption. The mystery

* In a pamphlet on 'The Divine Fatherhood in Relation to the Atonement' (Ward and Co.), I have dwelt on this point fully.

of life is parallel to both. We can know much about life, but the thing itself we cannot touch, it is hid with God. Essential as was the life of the Lord as God's witness to man, the death was yet more essential as the basis of God's work for man. He died that He might lay a foundation broad enough and strong enough to uphold the structure of the redeemed world. And His death did lay it; and it is glorious through eternity as the foundation on which the new creation rests. The Cross lies at the basis of it. "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain," will be the song of the redeemed through eternity. It is deeply important that we should see how, in the heavenly world, the cross, the symbol of the death, is the symbol of power. (Rev. v, 6-12; vii, 9-17.) "*In the midst of the throne a Lamb as it had been slain.*" I say, in all earnestness, that to regard the life of the Lord, that is, what we call His life, His sorrowful, shame-oppressed pilgrimage here—as His great work, to which His death was simply a martyr's seal, is "to trample under foot the Son of God, to count the blood of the covenant with which He was sanctified an unholy thing, and do despite to the spirit of grace."

Thus we see that what we call His life was but a death after all, while His death was His life; His birth into the world which the God-man fills with His glory, and rules with His hand.

And now we see, too, how His death was the death of Death. "Through death He destroyed him that had the power of death, that is, the devil, and delivered them who, through fear of death, were all their life-time subject to bondage." Death exulted as he levelled his shaft at that Divine victim; the devil and all the hosts of hell were behind Him to watch it speed. Fool! it sprang back from the breast of the Lord of life, and sheathed itself in his own heart. Man, long the victim of Death, has since been the master, and has sported with his

terrors from that hour. Commemorate His death, for it is the death of Death you are celebrating—through Christ,

“Death is the only thing in death that dies.”

It is the feast of emancipation—the emancipation of a death-tormented world. All this the Saviour saw with the inner eye, which was bright and clear as he drew near the cloud of the last agony, and pierced through it to the glory that was beyond—when he gathered the weeping, trembling band around him, and breaking the bread, and passing the cup, said to them: “This do in remembrance of me.” Take it, ye who would master death’s terrors, who would face him with the port of a king whom he has to crown for immortality. “For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord’s death till he come.” The Lord’s death till He come! that is the Lord’s life, your life, the death of Death, and hell’s destruction, till He come to announce that it is complete.

Lastly. The Lord will have us so commemorate His death, as to link it on to His life in glory and His second coming, “in the day of the manifestation of the Sons of God.” It seems to bid us look back, but like all that is of God, it truly bids us look on; onward, onward, upward, upward, to where the eye faints before the splendour which is around the throne of God and the Lamb. Never let us dare to sever the link of connection which He has thus established. He has passed up that He may reappear. “If I go away to prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself, that where I am there ye may be also.” The human interests bind him so tightly still, that they draw Him earthwards from the realms of glory, and will once more plant His divine footsteps on our earth. (Acts i, 11): The angels said, “Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which

is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven." For us He is gone, for us He abides enshrined in the splendour which human eyes have prevailed to look upon, and for us He will one day bring that splendour with Him, and light up for ever the darkness of our world. The glorious man must have a glorious world to live in. The sin which marred God's image in man veiled all the beauty, and dimmed all the brightness of the worlds. The Lord has undertaken to make them glorious once more, with a glory which shall eclipse their pristine lustre, as the crown which he wears as Redeemer outshines the many crowns which bind His brows. It is the great enterprise of redemption, and this gives to it universal relations, and a universal result. I hardly know what these words may mean, but something unutterably glorious, I am full well assured. (Col. i, 19, 20.) "For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell; And having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven." (Romans viii, 19-21). "For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope; Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God."

That hope of the universe Christ is fulfilling; to fulfil it He died. The work rests on his death. The latent splendour which is veiled under the gross material masks of earth, will break out into the brightness of the final glory, when the Lord "shall come the second time without sin unto salvation." Show forth then His death, the crown and completion of his life, the germ of the life which is eternal to man and to His world. (1 Thess. iv, 16-18.) "For the Lord himself shall descend from

heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words." And be content,

If now we fight the battle,
For then we wear the crown
Of pure and everlasting
And passionless renown:
O land that know'st no sorrow!
O state that know'st no strife!
O princely bowers! O land of flowers!
O realm and home of life!

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No. II.

TEARFUL SOWERS, JOYFUL REAPERS.

"They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him." Ps. cxxvi, 5, 6.

"TEARFUL sowing, joyful reaping," is the law of all labour. Every workman, as far as the fruit of his labour stretches, is saved by hope. Seed time is ever the season of anxious toil; harvest home the jubilee of joy.

It is, perhaps, the grandest argument for the being of a God, or rather the widest rent through this crust of sense by which we can look out on the fact, that all things are made and live in hope. The present is ever giving birth to the future by the sacrifice of itself. And if God were not the pledge of the glory and grandeur of that future—and when I say God I mean God in Christ, for then I know what I am talking about—a heavy, deadly pall would rest on all things here, the life of the world would in that case be but a desperate struggle with death. But tell us that death is life, new

life, more glorious life—and a great light shines out and dissipates the gloom. Joyfully we suffer and struggle, and see all things suffer and struggle, for “they that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.” (Ps. cxxvi, 5, 6.) Rob us of our faith in God, and what is that future, where is it? It is, because He is ; if He is not, it is not—all is death. A deep, suppressed undertone of aspiration runs through the whole of nature. Every act and manifestation of her life has a deeper relation to the future than to the present. Indeed, nature means a “becoming”—that which is about to be. Not for itself wholly does the bee suck the honey of the flowers. Not for itself, surely, does the plant bury its seeds beneath the soil, and die. Not for itself does the mother bird tend its callow nurselings, and watch and toil with a single-hearted devotion that touches the hardest, that they may have shelter and food. Not for themselves do the generous brutes which God has made the satellites of man clothe themselves with strength and swiftness, and die to guard their master’s treasure or his child. Our sympathies with the animal creation rise in warmth and intensity just as it grows more unselfish and devoted, sinks the present in the future, and lives, though it knows it not, in hope. They have been no shallow thinkers who have founded on such facts the doctrine of the immortality of brutes, though we cannot fully assent to their conclusion, inasmuch as in brutes no true personality appears. Still the aspect of creation would be a sad and bitter one, blotted as it is by tears and stained with sweat of both brain and heart, if we were not able to discern that one great thought runs through the whole of it, utters itself in higher and yet higher speech as the orders of being become more capable of expressing it, until at length in man that thought unfolds itself, and finds its full, eternal expression in the tearful

sowing, the joyful reaping, of the incarnate Son of God. But we have a right to ask whether this universal "groaning of creation," which thus found speech and uttered itself to God, is the moaning of the agony of the hopeless, or the sobbing of a child on a father's bosom, prelude of fruitful reconciliation and fulness of joy. God's answer is, "*They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.*"

I.—I must first endeavour to bring out the significance of the emblem here employed. The Scriptures compel us to believe that the relation between spiritual labour and husbandry is peculiarly close and real. "*Behold a sower went forth to sow.*" "*And he said, So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground: and should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how. For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear. But when the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come.*" (Mark iv, 26-9.) Husbandry is the oldest, simplest, and most heaven-ordained labour of man. Arts and sciences fall under the head of inventions—they exercise the proud intellect, and need a heavy discipline of suffering before they take their place, humbly, as the servants of the regenerate will. But husbandry works quite otherwise; it keeps man in his place as a servant, and exercises patience, obedience, and faith. These are the points in which it seems to me that husbandry is suggestive of the spiritual workman. I shall dwell upon them for a moment before I proceed.

1. It is a work of homely, wholesome, patient labour. A man can only get *from* the soil in the proportion in which he puts *into* it. And he must not only put in seed, but work, which

costs much more. "*In the sweat of thy brow shalt thou eat bread.*" There is no work that I know which is so earnest and constant, the conditions of which are so fixed that the workman has but to submit to them at once. Work by fits and starts in this field is worthless. They are not the white-handed and womanish men who wield the flail or drive the ploughshare, nor may they be dilettanti workmen who till the spiritual seed-field of God. In both fields the work must be honest and earnest—patient, sinewy toil, in search of the treasure which has been hidden in the bosom of the mother earth, both of nature and of man, by the Lord.

2. *Submission*.—God has made a law—"In the sweat of thy brow thou shalt eat bread." The toil of the husbandman is the first act of submission, the first confession of man that the devil lied to him when he said "*Ye can become as gods*" by sin. The earth will not yield him one grain in obedience to his will; it yields only in answer to his work. And work implies conditions—laws, obedience to a master, subjection to the Lord. God makes man work in submission to His laws for his daily sustenance. Through husbandry He brought the rebel at once benignly in contact with the serene, inflexible law which he thought to overthrow. It is law, God's law, which holds out man's daily bread to him. He must bow, do homage, accept the investiture, before it will put even a fragment into his hands. Dimly, blindly, he may make his submission to the God whom he had defied, and take thus his first step in spiritual education; still it is a step, and God seeks to lead man, the labourer, on through the ascending stages of culture, until he seeks, consciously and lovingly, not submission to all the will only, but fellowship with the Spirit, of the Lord.

3. *Faith*.—All husbandry is of faith. The seed is trusted to the bosom of Nature. It must be left there, buried out of sight, till by agencies which he cannot control, whose secret his

cunning science cannot master, it springs, and returns to the light of day. He *must* cast the care of it on Him who bears the burden of Nature, gives security for all her deposits, and is the trustee of her every hope. It is bread, too, which the husbandman buries—his children's bread—but he buries it out of sight, beyond recovery, in deep trust in what we call the laws of Nature, but which we know to be the hand of God. He and his, in scant years, may endure agonies of hunger, but his seed-corn he dares not consume; on that hangs his whole future, in that lies all his hope, and that, in a strange external image of deeper things, he lays up with God. Here is faith of the heartiest and manliest kind. "*He casts his bread upon the waters,*" for he believes "*he shall find it after many days.*" Storms may beat on it, frosts may chill it, floods may drench it, winds may blight it, but it hardly ruffles the surface of his confidence—"he knows that he shall come again rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him." These hints may help you to understand why the sacred writers dwell so fondly upon husbandry, as the fullest emblem of spiritual work. But "TEARFUL SOWING." This belongs surely to a new region; the key to this must be in the conditions of the spiritual world. Yes; but even this has wondrous adumbrations in nature. The anxious care and sorrow of the husbandman are in his sowing. The winter, the storm, the blight, are before him. Reaping seals his increase. The perils are behind him; care is over; he breaks out into singing, the most joyous song of the universe, the song of the harvest home. I now proceed to dwell on the law of spiritual labour, in the double aspect which is thus presented to us—the tearful sowing, the joyful reaping after many days.

II. *The tearful sowing.*

Is there a needs must be for this, and out of what conditions does it spring?

1. Let us consider the nature of the seed which we sow—"precious seed"—and see if any light is cast thence upon the law of spiritual toil. "Precious seed" we sow—seed which has cost us much—has cost Christ much; how precious, is known only to ourselves and God. I am speaking of every one and to every one who has undertaken a work of ministry to a human body, mind, or soul, in its hours of need. Christ, the captain of our labour, came to till the seed-field and to cast His own life into its bosom, and its fruit is life everlasting in all the children of God. "*Through death he conquered him that had the power of death, that is, the devil, and delivered them who, through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage.*" "*And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me.*" Even the husbandman casts in his subsistence—the bread of the body. Not otherwise is it with us, the disciples of the Lord Jesus. The seed we sow in human hearts is just the life-bread of our own souls. Living seeds alone can germinate. If we are to sow anywhere for God we must sow that which is living in us, and nothing lives in us but what has cost toil and pain. Husks—that is, doctrinal forms, if the life is gone out of them, terms, memories, repetitions—lie and rot on the souls on which we cast them, happy if they do not rot the souls. Because of the fearful proportion of husk and chaff in our public preachings, there is so much rottenness in the Church and so much scorn in the world. Words which are spirit and life *they* only can give who have courage to live from the depths of their nature—and they are not the many, alas! yet. That which has been passed through the crucible of our own experience, refined by the fires and nourished by the stuff of our own spirits—truths which we have borne with us through floods and flames, and would grapple to us but the more closely were we about to plunge into some unknown abyss—"precious seed"—*we draw it out of the storehouse weeping.* It is the mute

memorial of many a battle, many a spasm of agony of which Christ only knoweth, many a desolate hour when death, had he come to us, would have seemed like a beautiful angel, sent to unloose the overstrained spirit from its load. Do you want power in preaching, in teaching, in comforting?—be willing to suffer more. The teachers who wield the mightiest power have won it there. *“For I think that God hath set forth us the apostles last, as it were appointed to death: for we are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men. We are fools for Christ’s sake, but ye are wise in Christ; we are weak, but ye are strong; ye are honorable, but we are despised. Even unto this present hour we both hunger, and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwelling-place; and labour, working with our own hands: being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it: being defamed, we intreat: we are made as the filth of the world, and are the offscouring of all things unto this day.”* (1 Cor. iv, 9—13.) Doubtless. Why? *“Blessed be God even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted by God.”* (2 Cor. i, 3, 4.) Talk goes but a little way; words which are from the life, which a man has lived in some deep hours, go home. God gave not stars, constellations, the jewels of the sky, when He would help His children; he gave His Son out of His heart, the word of His life; and HE gave toil, tears, life-blood, to sow effectually the seed-field of the world. We sow in tears, because of the preciousness of the seed we are sowing. Every grain of it a trophy, and the memorial of a pain.

2. The conditions of the field which we cultivate.

Every soul is a veiled sanctuary, a shrine impenetrable, to every other soul. No will of ours can lift the curtain, or break

the silence, or search the hidden depths. A soul is not like the submissive clods which the husbandman crushes. If we would work on souls—would sow the seed of principles, strengthen resolutions, and develop the higher life, just in proportion to our earnestness and intensity will the solemn and sad impression steal over us, that there is the sacredness of a personal will between us and the element we would work in; that our most striving efforts may spend themselves against it, like rain-drops on the rock of the wilderness, utterly, hopelessly in vain. What teacher would not like to have the seed-field exposed and submissive before him like the fields of nature, that his will might have way, and accomplish with swift certainty its benignant work. But God will humble our will, and make us more dependent than even the husbandman on his co-working. How often, just in the midst of our most resolute efforts, and on the eve, as we hope, of some large success, are we made to feel, in bitterness and sadness of heart, that there is a shrine there which we may not enter, a depth there which we may not reach, a soul there which we have not force to conquer and may not avail to save; and we weep as we work. Faith's visions come chiefly through the mist of tears.

3. The seed we sow in human hearts—like seed sown on the waters—vanishes from sight and touch; precious as it was, it is gone from us, our effort can help it no more. We have committed it to One who can watch it, but "*whose ways are not as our ways, whose thoughts are not as our thoughts.*" Our sowing is but the prelude to long watching and waiting, tearful vigils, strenuous efforts, wrestling prayers to Him who can reach it and seems to withhold His hand. Tell me, ye mothers who have wrestled for a blessing on the seed sown in your children's hearts, ye teachers who have striven with God for a blessing on your class, ye pastors who have been intercessors for your flocks, is it not like the pangs of the travailing,

the tears and the groans of one that bringeth forth a child to God, until we "remember no more the anguish for joy that a man is born unto the world."

4. The devil always besets the best works with the selectest difficulties and dangers, and makes—thus far his power reaches—speaking truth and doing good a harder and sadder thing than the labours of Hercules or the fabled lifting of a world. He beats the soil so hard by the constant passing up and down of worldly thoughts and habits, that it becomes almost impossible to break it, and, while the seed lies there, "*then cometh the devil and catcheth away that which was sown on the heart.*" He makes those whom we are most purely desirous to bless, turn on us in bitterness as our most malignant foes. He exposes the tender shoot which has rooted and is growing there to the most searching trials, and surrounds the objects of our culture with scenes and influences which choke the word we have planted in their souls. You may have borne witness against blasphemy, anger, drunkenness, to your children, and you dread that the first thing which they will hear when they leave you will be an oath, while wrangling and drunkenness will be the chief experience in their homes. A preacher may have impressed on some young soul the vanity of earth, the value of heavenly things, and we know that on the morrow the world will offer its choicest baits to that soul to tempt it to let go its hold on Christ and heaven. That tender nursling of faith will have to endure a fire of temptation in which disciplined and hardened manhood could hardly guard its crown. The seed is sown in tears; we go forth weeping to cast our bread upon the waters; blessed be God we know that we shall find it again, though it may be after many days.

5. The most precious culture is that which we bestow on the seed-field of our own spirits, and every seed that

is planted must be wet with tears ere it germinates there.

You see the great ones of the world, the truly great, the great in this region of life ; the furrows seam the brow which was once smooth and broad ; a veil dims the light which once flashed so gaily from the eye ; a sad, yet serene, sense of the painfulness of life, which looks out so touchingly from all richly cultured and nobly fruitful spirits, tells the tale of the kind of seed-sowing which has been accomplished there. "*If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.*" None of us have fathomed the depth of that mystery ; but some have looked into it, and found it strangely attract them as they gazed. The laurels gained in those dreadful conflicts with the devil, where as our own selves he haunts us, as the right hand or the right eye he tempts us ; when, like Abraham, we have to lay down the most precious jewel of our being ; like Christ, to lay down life that we may take it again at the hand of God, are never worn before men. Christ keeps them, they are the trophies which adorn His temple, and they shall one day bind our brows, when He takes us, as He passed Himself, from the stress and agony of the conflict to the glory of the crown. "*Cast thy bread upon the waters, thou shalt find it after many days.*"

III. The law ordains a tearful sowing. Let us lift our eyes now, and see how surely it ordains a joyful reaping on high. This compensation rests on the fact—

1. That every word and work that comes forth from us, born of the inward life, has not only our life but God's life in it ; a portion of the life which is eternal is in it ; it cannot, it shall not die. Cast on the waters, lost to our warm interest and straining sight, it is as near to Him as ever, as dear. Life has wonderful tenacity ; the corn buried

with the mummies of Egypt 3000 years ago brings forth fruit still. The years, the ages, these are not God's measures. The word, the work, lives before Him, and is eternal. It seemed quite lost to you, lying storm-tost on the rock of some cold, hard nature, or buried in some sensual heart. No, brother; not lost, not lost. No! We shall meet them again—these words which we have spoken, these deeds which we have done, these struggles which we have borne, these victories which we have silently achieved—we shall see them again, not marred and tear-stained as we knew them here, but transfigured, glorious. We shall dwell at length with these children of our travelling spirits; they shall attend us lovingly in the great circle of our orbit, and rain soft moonlit lustre upon our lives, as we circle around the central Sun of being, in the placid celestial deeps, for ever and ever.

2. God establishes this law of tearful sowing just that He may lead us to this fruitful and victorious union with Himself.

He limits the power of our will, not that He may crush us under a sense of our helplessness, but that He may enlarge us by ranging His almighty will on our side. He throws this element of doubt and darkness into our labour that He may rouse our faith to lay hold on His strength and conquer. The very conditions of the tearful sowing assure the joyful reaping, while He lives to fulfil His promise, for to this end were they ordained by Him. Listen to this: "*It is not expedient for me doubtless to glory. I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord. I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such an one caught up to the third heaven. And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) how that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for*

a man to utter. Of such an one will I glory ; yet of myself will I not glory, but in mine infirmities. For though I would desire to glory, I shall not be a fool ; for I will say the truth : but now I forbear, lest any man should think of me above that which he seeth me to be, or that he heareth of me. And lest I should be exalted above measure, through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee : for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake : for when I am weak, then I am strong. I am become a fool in glorying ; ye have compelled me : for I ought to have been commended of you : for in nothing am I behind the very chiefest apostles though I be nothing. Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds." (2 Cor. xii, 1—12.)

3. We are not isolated in this work. We belong to an advancing army, we fight in a field of victory, we serve a Master who must push His triumphs until He has fulfilled the largest purpose of His love. We may not be able to trace the track of our particular effort, but the track of the whole band of workmen, army of soldiers, is clear, illustrious, and leads up to glory. Let our little effort perish ; if Christ wins the sceptre of the world, He realises our success. All the great ones have lived before their ages, and wrought on in the backwoods of time, silent and alone. How many men understood Paul, Augustine, Alfred, Dante, Milton, in their day ? " It takes the world two hundred years to find out its heroes," says Carlyle. But when did the world ever fail to press up to the ground they

won? Not more surely will the whole tide of civilisation overflow the ground where yon stout backwoodsman's axe is ringing through the silent forest, than will the whole world be one day up to and beyond the landmarks of truth which some brave pioneer is setting up now in sorrow, and it may be in shame. Christ's disciples are called to be the pioneers, and to work and fight—where some who seem to be leaders like least to fight—in the van. It is said that the Douglas took the heart of his great captain, Bruce, enclosed in a silver case, to the wars against the infidels. Whenever the battle went hard against the soldiers of the Cross he would unclasp it from his neck, and fling it far on before them into the midst of the enemies' war. "Pass on, great heart, into the midst of the battle, as oft thou hast done. The Douglas will follow thee or die." One loves to see a man daring, as it were, to cast on his heart in advance of him. "There is the line of progress! Pass on, great thought, warm with the life-blood of a beating heart, pass on! Man will follow thee, pass up to thee, or die." No! none ever died in that battle; far on as they may project their spirits, they shall live to pass onward and onward yet. They shall see the ground which they strove to occupy pressed by the feet of Christ's conquering legions, while the eye of their spirit, in quest of fresh conflicts and triumphs, glances onward and upward still. Here or there they shall see and celebrate the victory. They shall not lose, but hang up in triumph the weapons with which they ended the war. Let us know that every spiritual seed cast into the human soil is the conquering of a fresh portion of the devil's empire for God. By sowing there we plant His standard, and He never loses what He once has won. Then, let no conflict, sorrow, anguish of spirit, which the sowing may cost us, shake our faith that "*they that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bear-*

ing precious seed, shall doubtless come again rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."

4. We thus realise the full communion with the Saviour; and that is the highest joy of a spirit—"the joy which the world giveth not and taketh not away." Again, I say, granted that our seeds seem to perish, that our hopes seem to be frustrated, "sowing," we are fellow-workmen with Christ, and may enter into His joy. Nothing can rob us of the great prize—a likeness to, an eternal dwelling with, Him. If we work for Him, His victory is our victory; and when He shall see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied, we, too, be our life-work where it may, shall rejoice, "*with joy unspeakable and full of glory.*" There is a sorrowful picture of the Lord's solitary work:—"Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save. Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the winefat? I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with me: for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment. For the day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come. And I looked, and there was none to help; and I wondered that there was none to uphold: therefore mine own arm brought salvation unto me; and my fury, it upheld me." (Is. lxiii, 1—5.) Not thus, blessed be Christ, work we. Our work, small and poor as it may seem, is in the full presence of the Lord and the angels, is sustained by all the sympathies and prospered by all the forces of the celestial world.

I have spoken, in this discourse, of teachers and to teachers. I have endeavoured to lay bare the law of your activity and the secret of your success. Every one who has learnt any-

thing from God is bound to be a teacher of that to his fellows. "*Freely ye have received, freely give.*" The law is absolute in every region. No thing, no being, grows otherwise than by imparting. Sun, stars, flowers, are all under this law, and work out by ministry their Maker's will. But see that you teach that which God has taught you. Confer not with flesh and blood, but with the Lord, and impart the wisdom and strength which you gain from vital intercourse with Him as your own precious gift to mankind. Let it be your own bread of life, the bread of your daily pilgrimage, the strength which sustains you through your conflicts, the source whence spring your victories. Speak, because necessity is laid on you to speak, because "woe is unto you if you speak not" what the Lord hath spoken unto you. "Here stand I," said Luther. "I can do no other, God help me." Think what conflict and anguish that man had passed through before he could say "This one thing I do; I can do no other, so help me, God." And think how his heart exults to find that, in doing this one thing which he was pressed in spirit to do, he was doing the very greatest thing, the chief thing which the world was needing, that he was planting seeds which have borne fruits of life to generations of the noblest races and ages of men.

Pray that, as teachers, God may shut you up to speak the word which He has put into your lips. And would you have power with hearts, don't be afraid to suffer. Think you that we preachers have not to learn by suffering how to reach your hearts? A teacher who knows not the "temple of sorrow" may amuse, attract, but can never edify men. Think you that it is no source of sadness to us preachers that we are chiefly sharers of your sorrows; that if we are brought near to you it is chiefly because sickness, sorrow, and death are in your homes? But don't be afraid to sympathise, much as it may

exhaust for the moment ; it is God's great means of enlarging and strengthening souls. Throw your hearts open to His discipline, and if you suffer "*glory in it.*" Learn to "count them happy which endure." For the fruit of endurance is power to fulfil your ministry to the world. It may be that these words may reach the hands of some who are moaning over the feebleness of their efforts and the slightness of their success. There are few earnest and faithful teachers who have not again and again to utter this plaint, "Who hath believed our report, and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?" Perhaps you are pleading importunately with God that He would give you more zeal, more power with souls, more fruits. Are you ready for His answer? You are praying for enlargement of power and success. What if the first step to that be enlargement of soul? What if His answer be the enlarging you? You know the answer of Christ to the mother of Zebedee's children. (Matt. xx, 20—28.) I say, what if God's answer to your prayer be the enlarging *you*? What if He leads you through deeper waters, till you cry, "Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of thy waterspouts, and all thy waves and billows are gone over me"? What if He strains every fibre and nerve with pain? and then, when He has taught you to know Him more richly in adversities, sends you back to work with a depth, a force, a sympathy, you have never known before—are you ready? Can you take with you into those floods and fires an unwavering assurance that if you suffer with Christ you shall reign with Him, that if you die with Him you shall live; and that "he who goeth forth weeping, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him," if not here, in eternity?

AIDS TO THE DEVELOPMENT
OF THE
DIVINE LIFE.

BY THE
REV. J. BALDWIN BROWN, B.A.

No. IV.

COME THOU WITH US, AND WE WILL DO
THEE GOOD.

"Come thou with us, and we will do thee good."

NUMB. x, 29.

I BELIEVE that this expresses the essential spirit of the Jewish dispensation. It is the essential spirit of all God's dispensations. His chief word to man, every when and every where, is "Come." "*Ye will not come unto me that ye may have life*" is God's last sorrowful complaint over that Jewish people, and over every finally impenitent and outcast soul. But who can read the Bible honestly and not feel that every page is charged with invitation? The words of its last chapter, the words which sum up the whole tenor of the book with emphatic yet tender and pathetic appeal, "*And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely,*" (Revelations xxii, 17),—these words express that yearning desire and love of God, which gives its broad character to the whole Bible, from the first chapter of Genesis to the last words of the Apocalypse, and

bear their witness to every heart, not closed already against conviction, that the God of the Bible, as He testifies of Himself, is LOVE. It was not until all the resources of moral attraction and constraint had been exhausted, that the Saviour wept over doomed Jerusalem, and poured forth that most pathetic of all lamentations, "*Oh that thou hadst known, at least in this thy day, the things that make for thy peace, but now they are hid from thine eyes.*" "*O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.*" (Matt. xxiii, 37—39.)

I have said that I believe that this passage expresses the essential spirit of Judaism. This may seem a strange notion to those who have been in the habit of regarding the Jewish dispensation as a dispensation of special and precious privileges, in whose blessings the Gentile nations were not permitted to share. I believe that the history of the Jewish dispensation is often regarded as a strong ground of attack by the opposers of revealed truth; and as many, not among the working classes only, are misled by it, it is worth our while to examine the point calmly, and judge for ourselves what the objection is worth.

There are those in the Church who believe that God's express aim in Judaism was to keep the Jewish people as separate from the world as possible; to keep them, like Noah, in an ark, while He plagued and punished the world at His will. But I maintain, on the contrary, that Judaism was always genial and benignant to the stranger who would adopt its belief and accept its blessings. From the evil which was

in the world God was minded to keep the Jewish people free at any cost. From idolatry and its attendant pollutions He sought to deliver them, inasmuch as idolatry in the long run inevitably leads to national decline and death. To the stranger, the foreign person or nation, who would dishonour its beliefs and trample on its blessings, Judaism was stern as Fate and pitiless as Death. The nations which had filled up the measure of their iniquity, whose only influence must be corrupting, were ruthlessly exterminated. A terrible lesson taught the Jews the price of pagan sensuality and crime. There is an era in which much blood is shed in the history of the education of every people, and on a great scale in the history of the education of the world. Not that God wills it, but that man will have it. Passion breaks loose, sensuality riots at will, and it is mostly only by the spectacle of the woe and ruin it works, that it is taught how mad it is, and is disposed to submit itself to the restraining hand of God. So there was no weak pity for nations which had become so corrupt as to become inevitably corruptive, just as there is no weak pity in society for abandoned criminals now. How utterly, hopelessly, awfully profligate the Canaanitish nations were, is narrated in the 18th Chapter of the Book of Leviticus: the last verses must be quoted, as in this lies the justification of the awful doom of which the Jews were the executioners. *"Defile not ye yourselves in any of these things: for in all these the nations are defiled which I cast out before you: and the land is defiled: therefore I do visit the iniquity thereof upon it, and the land itself vomiteth out her inhabitants. Ye shall therefore keep my statutes and my judgments, and shalt not commit any of these abominations; neither any of your own nation, nor any stranger that sojourneth among you: (for all these abominations have the men of the land done, which were before you, and the land is defiled:) that the land spue not you out also, when ye defile it,*

as it spued out the nations that were before you. For whosoever shall commit any of these abominations, even the souls that commit them shall be cut off from among their people. Therefore shall ye keep mine ordinance, that ye commit not any one of these abominable customs, which were committed before you, and that ye defile not yourselves therein: I am the Lord your God." (Leviticus xviii, 24—30.) I say, the Jews were simply God's executioners here, and the same doom, they are plainly warned, awaited them if they suffered themselves to be tempted into the same sins. The nations of whose pollutions the very land was weary, were swept off as the stubble before the flame. But this was the accident and not the essential character of the dispensation. The law here in England is merciful, though it has often to deal out terrible judgment on flagrant sins. And I am persuaded that the more carefully the spirit of the dispensation is studied, the more plainly will it appear that it is expressed in our text. From Moses to Zechariah, it is a cry to the nations, not to rot in their own corruption, "COME WITH US AND WE WILL DO YOU GOOD." How benignantly in the closing verses of the 8th Chapter of the Book of Joshua, the "strangers which were conversant among them" are included in the benediction. How earnestly Daniel and his coadjutors sought to diffuse the blessings of Judaism among the nations which had enslaved them, and to make the Oriental despots sharers of the knowledge of the living God, which by revelation they had gained. How emphatically the Prophets take up and echo the invitation with growing clearness and earnestness through the ages, until it breaks out into full utterance in the great Successor of Moses, the great Fulfiller of the Law, the Son of David, the King in Zion, "*And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me.*" Judaism in all ages was a witness for God to the nations, and a means of drawing all that would be drawn unto Himself.

I. And this leads me to lay down this general principle—

God's privileges, the gifts which He bestows, and the advantages which He confers on some, are never intended to be exclusive. They are never meant to dishearten men and to drive them to despair, but always to be the means of drawing men to Himself.

This is not at all a favorite view of the Church and its privileges with some—and some, too, who undertake very loudly to speak for God, and to interpret His mind to the world in our day. Their favorite notion is, not that the Church is composed of all who will obey the drawing of God, but of those on whom God has, in the exercise of His sovereign will, set a mark, and whom He so draws as to compel them to come. The Church, on this supposition, consists, of course, of a strictly privileged class, in whose privileges the outside world may never hope to share. The man who is unmarked, whom the sovereign election has passed by, may look in, just as a beggar might peep wistfully into a banquet hall which is open only to kings. Whoso can believe that this is a true account of the ways of God, of the God who is Love, let him believe it. I thank God that I find it impossible. God calls all, He calls you. The banquet is spread for all, it is spread for you. The door is open to all, it is open to you. The message is pressed on all, it is pressed on you. The servants lay hold on all, they lay hold on you, and compel you by the soft compulsion of love to come in.

It is a condition of high privilege—of great, eminent, glorious joy and hope. A Christian, if he believed it, would not change his position and hopes, even in rags, sickness, and outward misery, with the archangel before the throne. For which of the angels has been called a brother of Christ, and an heir of everlasting glory.

But if any man say "these privileges and hopes are mine,

because I am happy enough to belong to a sealed number, a number to which poor sinners are not called, who are not privileged like me," he wrongs God, he wrongs God's great Love, in his thoughts. If, further, he says this, as the Pharisees did, by his spirit and manner as he moves about among his fellow-men, he dishonours God's name, he drags, as far as he can do it, His glory, the glory of His redeeming love to the world, in the dust. If God gives to one man advantages which He denies to another, it is that the first may be His minister to bring that other to share in His joy. I believe this to be universally true of the privileges and advantages which God confers on nations and on men. He means them to be ministries. He means brother to minister to brother; and ministry, like mercy, is "twice blessed; it blesseth him that gives and him that takes." It lies at the root of all the higher developments of society; it is God's ordinance for the completing of His work of benediction in the world.

Unless a Church or a Christian be attracting men, ever saying to them by look, voice, manner, hand, "Come with us and we will do thee good," it is simply doing what the Jews did, causing the name of God to be blasphemed. Nothing so makes men to blaspheme as to be told that God has placed this man in a position, and has called him with a calling, which that man cannot hope to share. And this is what the doctrine which is preached in many popular pulpits comes to. It is of no use to try to take off the edge of the difficulty by saying, "True, there is this effectual calling of some, and this leaving of others uncalled to perish, but no man can read the names in the book of God's decrees, so no man can say he is wrongfully dealt with in comparison with another, inasmuch as no man can be sure, or even has the right to think, that his name is not there." The principle of action is the one thing in question here with all honest minds; and when they are told that this

is the principle of God's action, and read in God's book, "ARE NOT MY WAYS EQUAL, SAITH THE LORD?" they say plainly, either there must be a more righteous and loving explanation of God's ways, or that sentence, with every word which dwells on His love "to man, yea, to the rebellious also," must be blotted out of His book. "I would that not thou only, but also all that hear me, were not almost but altogether such as I am, except these bonds," said a God-inspired man. The God who inspired him says the same by him to us—to every individual member of the lost human race. I now proceed to dwell on the invitation. It should be the spoken, the silent utterance of every Christian man, of every Christian household, of every Christian Church. That it should be so was manifestly God's purpose in separating men from the corrupting mass around them, and bringing them near unto Himself. They were to be educators, purifiers, ministers to the world around them, to bring them, by the soft bands of loving, human agency, into fellowship with their God, their "God and Father reconciled in Christ Jesus."

II. The invitation which, in the name of the Christian community of which I am the minister, I urge on you, "COME WITH US AND WE WILL DO YOU GOOD."

I endeavour to present it under four forms :

1. Come with us to the House of God.
2. Come with us to the Word of Truth.
3. Come with us to the living Saviour.
4. Come with us to the Home of the Great Family in Heaven.

1. Come with us to the House of God.

I believe that God never gave to man a more blessed boon than the day of rest. But like all God's other gifts, just in proportion to its preciousness is it despised and profaned by

those to whom its ministries are most important, and its benediction most large and complete. I am not here thinking of attempting to place it on the ground of legal obligation. I am not trying to prove to Sabbath-breakers that they are sinners against a law in neglecting to honour God's day. How few, even in these days, understand that "we are not under the law but under grace." It is not a *law* of the Sabbath which you are breaking, but something which it is yet more terrible to sin against, God's loving and gracious counsel, in creating for you a day of rest, and guarding it, as man cannot guard it by the most elaborate positive laws. How much almost fatal mischief has been done by the extent to which this day of rest has been treated as a legal obligation, and men have been charged as transgressors of a legal commandment, instead of as despisers of a gracious boon! Still, as of old, the law but developes sin. We want a Gospel of the Sabbath sadly—a Gospel which shall secure its honour, by revealing it as the good gift of God. It is on this ground alone that I urge the subject on you in this place. I want you to feel how good the ordinance is, and to love it for its goodness, and to love the Lord who gave it, and who guards it, as man could never guard it, by His Spirit in the Church.

In Genesis ii, 1—3, we find these words, "*Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made.*" From what did God rest? From activity? Surely not; but simply from creation; from what, under human conditions, is conceived of as the toil of production. His activity and energy, continued during the seventh day to sustain and to quicken the universe which He

had made. "MY FATHER WORKETH HITHERTO, AND I ALSO WORK," was the answer of the Saviour to the charge that He had done something on the seventh day not expressly counted among the lawful, because necessary, Sabbath works. God rested; but His rest was the sustaining of the Creation, the upholding of the order, beauty, and fruitfulness of the world. The sun, at His bidding, that morning, came forth with his wonted splendour, the earth flushed with joy, to meet the eye of her bridegroom, and spread all her glorious beauty forth to respond to his passionate gaze. That was God's Sabbath day's work. And man is to rest in his measure like God, —a rest of joyful, holy activity; the activity of that which is highest and most God-like in him; not the rest of a brute, sleeping lazily before a fire. How many of you spend your idle, joyless Sundays just like a dog before a hearth. You lie as long as you can, get up as late as you can, loll, lounge, smoke, drink, gossip till it is time to lie down again, spending the most lazy, useless, lifeless, cheerless day of all the seven, and then wake up next morning jaded and weary, in heart at any rate, and begin the dreary round of joyless work. That is not a man's rest; it is a brute's. Man is a spirit, and man's spirit rests only in communing with God, and doing the Father's mission. The rest which man wants is a pure breath of the air of that heavenly region, which is the native home of his spirit, that he may brace himself for his daily toil by intercourse with Him who has ordained the task, in loving fatherly wisdom, and whose approval is never wanting when the work has been faithfully done. The man who has lifted his soul up from the earth by such contemplations on the first day of the week, will find himself strong to resist the temptation to grovel during the rest. He will go to his work, hard as it may be, uncongenial as it may be to his tastes and habits of thought, with a higher view of it, what it is, what it means, what it secures. He sees,

taking a wide view, how good it is ; he knows who ordained it, who can help him against the deadly temptations which beset it, and who can crown it, be it humble as it may, with blessed fruits, which shall enrich eternity.

A God-fearing man, who gathers his household around him for prayer, and goes up with them to the house of God to worship and get fresh strength for the work of life, belongs at once to a higher class. Life means more to him and to his. Work means more, and produces more. Higher faculties are in play within him, higher joys and ends are within his reach. His children breathe a better atmosphere ; they are nursed to a more vigorous and manly stature of body, mind, and spirit ; they are prepared to honour their parents—and it is man's highest honour, the honour which well-trained children reflect on the home that reared them—in this life, serving their own generation nobly according to the will of God, and then to rejoin those who have gone on before them in the heavenly mansions on high. "*Come with us to the house of God.*" Learn with us wherein the true rest of a man's spirit consists, what it is which lightens life's burdens, soothes its sorrows, sanctifies its discipline, and crowns its labours. "*Come with us, and we will do you good.*"

2. Come with us to the word of truth.

As with the Lord's day, so with the Bible, there is a certain prejudice against it in the minds of many who have never studied its pages, or attempted to estimate fairly the work it has done for the world. Probably the Church has contributed to strengthen the prejudice, by the extent to which she has endeavoured to establish its authority, instead of revealing its blessings to mankind. Again, we have forgotten that we are not under the law, but under grace. God's word it is : the organ of communication of His absolute unchanging truth to

mankind. But we have failed to exhibit in its fulness the fact that these are God's "good words" to man. "Good news." The term is often on our lips; but we are sadly too prone to develop their authority rather than their goodness; to demonstrate their heavenly origin, rather than leave that to speak, by the truth and goodness of the words, for itself. But it were well worth the while of a thoughtful working-man, who has had infused into his mind certain prejudices about the Book, to consider how much of the beliefs which are dearest to him about himself, his fellow man, about truth, righteousness, and charity, about life, immortality, and God, are the gifts of God through the Bible—at least, in the clear, definite, and practical form in which we hold them—to the world. But there are some practical tests to which it is better to appeal.

I will suppose that sickness has entered your home. There is a fair young child, the darling of your heart, the little thing whose voice always welcomed you home at night, whose prattle never failed to cheer you as she sat on your knee by your fire-side at tea. Death has marked her. Day after day you come home, and miss the familiar welcome; you steal up to the bedside, and watch with an agony, whose measure none can *guess* at, the swift progress of the destroyer. At length the moment of the last struggle comes. One choking gasp—perhaps the word "Father," "Mother," seemed to form on her lips, and it is over. She lies there, fair as a plucked lily, and as perishing; soon you have to bury her out of your sight. Tell me, will it hurt you then to open your Bible and read there that the glorious King of Heaven, the King who reigns in the world into which your darling has passed, said once when a man upon earth, "*Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of Heaven.*" Would it be a dark thought, that He who took them in His arms and blessed them, has there gathered your little lamb in His arms, and

folded her in His bosom, with a tenderness which casts even yours into the shade!

Or, let us say you have fallen into trouble. You are out of work, or disabled by illness; food, firing, clothing are all too scanty, and there seems to be worse in store. All around you is dark, and the prospect darker still; will it hurt or help you to open your Bible, and read out the words of a man whose case was still darker, and, to a human eye, more hopeless than yours. *"Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of thy waterspouts: all thy waves and thy billows are gone over me. Yet the Lord will command his loving-kindness in the daytime, and in the night his song shall be with me, and my prayer unto the God of my life. I will say unto God my rock, Why hast thou forgotten me? why go I mourning because of the oppression of the enemy? As with a sword in my bones, mine enemies reproach me; while they say daily unto me, Where is thy God? Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God."* (Psalm xlii, 7—11.) Or these words of the great Apostle on the meaning and end of the discipline we endure. *"For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds. Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin. And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons. Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in*

subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live? For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness. Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.” (Hebrews xii, 8—11.)

Or it may be that the dear companion of your pilgrimage, the sharer of all your joys and sorrows through long and faithful years, lies dead at length; and you must write “There I buried Rachel” in your way-book of life, and go sadly, tearfully, through the rest of your journey alone. I think that if she died in faith, in the faith and hope of the Gospel, in sure and certain hope of a joyful resurrection, these words will come home to your spirit with a strange grandeur and power, as you stand by her new-made grave. “*But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ’s at his coming.* . . . Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I show you a mystery: we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, *Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death*

is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But, thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord." (1 Cor. xv, 20—23, 50—58.) Or when you yourself grow old and weary, and see the form of the angel of death advancing, it may be feel the point of his steely dart, will it depress and distress you to read out, "*The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies; thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever*" (Ps. xxiii.)—or will it move you to cry to Him who is waiting to redeem your spirit unto Himself, "*Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like theirs.*" There is no condition, there are no circumstances, for which blessed words are not to be found in that Book; words such as no mere man could speak to you. "Come with us to the word of truth." Learn with us to make it the man of your counsel, the way-book of your pilgrimage. "COME WITH US, AND WE WILL DO YOU GOOD."

3. Come with us to the living Saviour.

We do not say, "Come with us to our church fellowship, to swell our numbers." "Come with us to our Saviour," is our invitation; He will make known to you, and lead you to do His will. But come. We want you to get at the root of all

your suffering and wretchedness; all that makes the sadness of life and the bitterness of pain—a bad heart. Yes! Every honest-minded man will say, the test of it all is there. If I had but a better heart I should have a better life, a better hope, a better end. It is just that which Christ can give, and Christ alone. That is what He means when He calls Himself a Saviour. One who can cure the disease of sin, renew the heart, reform the nature, kindle within the spirit the love of God, of truth, of purity, and inspire the hope of heavenly glory. This is to save a man. And for this the Lord came, wrestled, suffered, died; that He might have the right and the power to preach regeneration to man. *“This man, because He continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood; wherefore He is able to save, even to the uttermost, all that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them.”* He has now the right and the power to say to the worst sinner upon earth, “Son, thy sins be forgiven thee: go in peace.”

He is waiting to say it to you. There are thousands around you to whom He has said it, who, believing “that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins,” can look up with loving confidence in the face of God. He has lifted their burdens, He has dissipated their dread. He has filled them with the hope which maketh not ashamed, “the peace which passeth all understanding, and the joy which is unspeakable and full of glory.” And they, rejoicing in this salvation, say to you, echoing His word—Come. Come with us to the living Saviour; come and listen to His message of mercy; come, stand before the cross on Calvary, look on Him, whom you, too, have pierced and mourn, and hear for yourself the blessed words, “Thy faith hath saved thee, go in peace.”

4. Come with us to the Father's home on high.

The life struggle will soon be ended. It will soon seem but a

slight matter to you how you struggled through. It is said of Paul's companions, "Some on boards, some on broken pieces of the ship. . . they all escaped safe to land." It is a picture of the life-course of how many noble and faithful ones. Life seems to them but one long battle with the fierce waves, breasting them, struggling with them; often choked, oftenwhelmed, but borne on by a mighty sustaining hand to the eternal shores. Oh! the rapture of the moments when the feet shall press it, and first feel the touch of that blissful shore. The peril, the darkness, the battle, the anguish, behind us for ever; before us the gleaming gate of Paradise, the innumerable company of angels, the general assembly and church of the first-born, the dear ones who have gone on before us, and who are already walking in white before the throne of God and of the Lamb. Come with us to Him who is "The Way." No man cometh unto the Father, or to His love, but by Him. Come with us to the Cross—no Cross, no Crown. Come with us to the battle—no battle, no victory. Come with us to the school of discipline—no suffering, no glory. "Come with us and we will do you good"—good, the measure of which will only be known in that day when you shall hear the sentence from the most sacred lips, "Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from before the foundation of the world."

AIDS TO THE DEVELOPMENT
OF THE
DIVINE LIFE.

BY THE
REV. J. BALDWIN BROWN, B.A.

No. V.
THE JOYS OF SALVATION.

"The joy of thy Salvation."—PSALM li, 12.

THERE is an old-fashioned ring about the word Salvation which brings it into high disfavour with that school of theology which rejoices in the denomination of "New." They find a full and rich meaning in the word, when used in a state of society such as that in which the apostles preached the Gospel—a society rotting in vice and misery, degraded by the foulest lusts and disfigured by the grossest wrongs that human imagination can conceive or human life display; a society whose very atmosphere was contamination—to live in which was to live in a lazar house of moral plague; from which, therefore, all who had even the faintest desire to live purely must fly, like Lot from Sodom, gathering up their garments round them, lest they should carry with them some elements of the contagion to the purer homes in which they sought to dwell. Yes, they needed salvation in the apostolic ages, as much as a plague-stricken man needs to be borne out into an untainted atmosphere, or a drowning man, in his last choking struggle with the waves, needs to be grasped by a strong hand and

lifted out of the jaws of death. But, then, this new school tells us, things have quite changed now. This is a Christian country, and men, it is said, "do not need to be made Christians, they are born Christians. What they need is the teaching of the truth, and the aid of the Spirit to help them to realise the gift which is freely bestowed on them by the grace of Christ. They need a Father's care and love, the wise discipline of His providence, the vigilant ministrations of His Church—the Father's counsels, the pastor's care; but not salvation—except in a very limited sense—for salvation is already theirs." I am far from feeling that there is no truth in this—that men born in a Christian land, and heirs, of necessity, of the moral enlightenment and development of the nation which has been for ages leavened with the truth of Christianity, stand related to God no otherwise than the heathen, who know not even His name, and are heirs of principles and practices on which the broad seal of the devil is plain. I believe that men born in a Christian land sustain, by virtue of the measure of Christian light which they cannot but receive, a very high and solemn relation to God, and are amenable to a more awful tribunal than the heathen who know Him not; but I believe that salvation, the salvation which is in Christ Jesus, is for them too "the one thing needful;" that no man can be born into it, that every man must seek and find it by repentance and faith, that with every one of us the question has to be practically settled—shall our privilege, our light, "our power to live," be a savour of life unto life, or of death unto death?—and that the settlement of that question affirmatively in every individual soul is "Salvation." There is many a man dying spiritually of the careless belief that he is saved, and need concern himself about the matter no more. "What more would you have me do?" said a woman to a city missionary. "I was baptized and confirmed, I have

had my children baptized and confirmed. What more?" What more? Simply "seek salvation;" for the apostle, who preached salvation to the heathen, would say of such a one, did he look upon her, "*I perceive that thou also art in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity.*" HERE, AS ELSEWHERE IN THE WORLD, MAN BY NATURE IS ON HIS WAY TO THE LOWEST AND NOT TO THE HIGHEST. The awakening to the consciousness of this, it may be slowly and from an early age, as with Timothy; it may be suddenly, with a sharp convulsion, as with the Philippian jailer—the crying out for deliverance from this, the acceptance of the way of escape from this, opened by the Gospel, is the seeking and finding the salvation of God. I dwell on the last word. It is God's salvation. It is no dreamy following of the upward instincts and aspirations of the nature; no trying to be just, pure, and good, and then, if we fail, and become selfish, sensual, and devilish, forgetting the failure and trying again, always trying, always hoping, with a vague belief that though sin always gets the better of us, there is some good thing in us which, after all, cannot be lost.

Neither, again, is it a vague reliance on God's goodness and mercy, a feeling that He is a Father, and cannot, therefore, doom His children to despair and death. These dreams and hopes are the salvations which men provide for themselves—but they are not, nor are they like, God's salvation.

God's salvation rests upon the knowledge of God Himself, as He has revealed Himself—His name—His word—His promises—His work; whereby, not by our own dreams or hopes, but by His declaration, "*We have strong consolation who have fled for refuge to the hope set before us in the Gospel.*" Remember, it is one thing to feel that He is a father, and must be full of love to His children; it is another thing to hear Him say, "I am a Father; I love as no human father can love,

and I give a gift, I do a work, by which the whole love of my heart is declared." "*For God so loved the world, that He gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.*" (John iii, 16, 17.)

The man rejoices in God's salvation, as far as the belief in the fatherly love of God is essential to it, who knows from God's own lips that God loves as a Father, and receives the tokens of a Father's love fresh from God's own heart. It is one thing to trust vaguely to God's goodness for pardon (and vague must be every conception born from man's own brain about things infinite and eternal); it is another thing to hear Him say, "*Come, now, and let us reason together; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow;*" and to follow His guiding finger till we behold "*the Lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the world.*" The man who rejoices in God's salvation, so far as sense of forgiveness is an element in it, is the man who has learnt before the cross, contemplating that awful "agony and bloody sweat, that cross and passion," the terrible earnestness of God's purpose, of God's desire, to forgive the sins of the world. It is one thing to have our hopes and instincts looking on towards immortality, to feel within us the stirring of powers for which this earth offers us no theatre and time no sphere, to see that the life of this world is not only a dark mystery, but is a foul stain on the character of God, unless the present discords are elements of a concord which shall be complete in celestial regions—these present sorrows elements of joys which shall ripen and bear fruit in life eternal; it is another thing to see "*life and immortality brought to light by the Gospel,*" to stand by the unsealed tomb of Lazarus and hear such awful words as these:—"I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me,

though he were dead, yet shall he live : and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this ? She saith unto him, Yea, Lord : I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world. And when she had so said, she went her way, and called Mary her sister secretly, saying, The Master is come, and calleth for thee. As soon as she heard that, she arose quickly, and came unto him. Now Jesus was not yet come into the town, but was in that place where Martha met him. The Jews then which were with her in the house, and comforted her, when they saw Mary, that she rose up hastily and went out, followed her, saying, She goeth unto the grave to weep there. Then when Mary was come where Jesus was, and saw him, she fell down at his feet, saying unto him, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died. When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her, he groaned in the spirit, and was troubled, and said, Where have ye laid him ? They said unto him, Lord, come and see. Jesus wept. Then said the Jews, Behold how he loved him ! And some of them said, Could not this man, which opened the eyes of the blind, have caused that even this man should not have died ? Jesus therefore again groaning in himself cometh to the grave. It was a cave, and a stone lay upon it. Jesus said, Take ye away the stone. Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith unto him, Lord, by this time he stinketh : for he hath been dead four days. Jesus saith unto her, Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God ? Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead was laid. And Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me. And I knew that thou hearest me always : but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me. And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth. And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes :

and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go.” (John xi, 25—44.) “Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father’s house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know. Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way?” (John xiv, 1—5.) “Go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God.” (John xx, 17.)

The man who has received these truths from God, these gifts of God, and knows why and “whom he has believed,” is the man in whom the joys of God’s salvation abound. He has *God’s salvation*; his ground is the everlasting rock, the Word of God. His fortress is the Almighty Name; his assurance is the unalterable purpose, the irrevocable promise, of the Father—sealed—made “yea and amen,” if the gift of the God-man can make it—in Christ Jesus. There is a ground external to our own notions, dreams, and aspirations, on which we plant our feet, and find our own dreams and hopes realised, because we can see them rooted in the *Will*—the *Word* of God. Thy salvation, my Lord and my God! Thy work for me! Thy gift to me—not my work! “*Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief.*” This is briefly the nature of God’s salvation. Now what are its joys?

The joys of God’s salvation.

1. The joy of a sufficient and final answer to the self-upbraidings of a guilty soul. I place this first, because the sense of guilt, the dread of doom, must be disposed of, before there can be any freedom, any upright, manly activity, any pure and

lasting joy. The sense of guilt—till a man has found refuge in Christ—acts on the spiritual and mental frame like a dose of narcotic poison. It is the devil's poison, with which he paralyzes, that he may ensnare, the soul. He is the accuser—a victorious accuser, until he is answered by Christ. The man who wakes up to comprehend the breadth and the depth of God's law, "*searching the thoughts and intents of the heart*"—who knows that sooner or later "*righteousness must be laid to the line, and judgment to the plummet*"—stands self-condemned. All refuges of lies have vanished, the naked realities appear, and his sin clouds over utterly the heaven of God's love. The sense of guilt torments him; sin seems to have poisoned all the vital springs. "*O miserable man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?*" The same cry rises to heaven from the teeming myriads who fill earth's darkness with their wailing. Nominal Christians may make light of it, but this question of the purging of guilt is the fundamental question of all the religions of heathendom—of all simple, untutored souls. "*Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God? shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?*" (Micah vi, 6—8.) And till the question is solved it is the great moral paralysis. The man who knows he is a bankrupt is mostly reckless in his expenditure. The man who knows he is doomed, like the inhabitant of a plague-stricken city, grows wild and wanton in very despair, and tries at any rate to deaden the dread by frantic and delirious joy. Thus the devil comes to hold, among all heathen nations, his saturnalia

of sin. And to this questioning there is but one joyful answer: "*I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin. There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. . . . Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*" (Rom. vii, 25; viii, 1—4, 33—39.) The burden falls off; the darkness is chased by dawn. "Eureka!" "I have found it!" is the cry. The poison is expelled; the glow of health returns; the blood courses freely in the arteries, and tingles in every vein; the dead man is alive again—"alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord." Sin still strives, but cannot reign; for the moment it regains the mastery, "*but if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.*" Christians who are overtaken by sin sometimes

have very dreadful views of the doom to which they expose themselves, as though theirs was the unpardonable sin. It was to believers John said, "*Brethren, if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father.*"

These doubts and dreads are of the devil, if they keep you from flying to Christ and pleading His name for forgiveness. They are of Satan's band of robbers, and spoil you—tried, tempted, weak, doubting Christian—of the joys of His salvation. "*For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement.*" (Rom. v, 10, 11.)

2. The joy of a portion which satisfies the heart's largest conceptions and desires.

A great thinker has said, "Give a man half a universe, and he will at once quarrel with the holder of the other half. What he needs is God's infinite universe all to himself." I do not think God's infinite universe would do. I think David comprehended it better when he said, "*My soul panteth for God, for the living God.*" There is that in man which the knowledge of the living God only can satisfy, which, having God, has all things in Him.

The soul soon loses its interest in bounded and visible treasures. "They may be good, beautiful," it says, "but they are not my God." If God be mine, mine to know, to commune with, to dwell with eternally, then am I richer than Croesus or Solomon, though I sit with Job on his dunghill, or lie with Lazarus, dog-licked, on the steps of the rich man's sumptuous door. We know what it is to love the creature—to feel that the love and communion of some fond, fair idol would make the bliss of earth, the bliss of eternity. He has the joys of

God's salvation who has done with idols—who loves only that which has eternal beauty and fairness in the creature, and finds that he has the very substance of all that may be loved in the Lord. The commerce between the believing soul and Christ is the ravishing sweetness of the present—the hope of unclouded vision, of unbounded communion, is the glorious treasure of the future. The cares, losses, heartaches of the present sink to nothing when weighed against His love. There were those—there are still—who can “*glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope: and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.*” (Rom. v, 3—5.)

3. The joy of an answer to all the difficulties and perplexities which beset the spirit and the intellect in their progress.

I do not say that the believer, in full communion with Christ and with the joys of His salvation, is freed from the mental and the moral cares which beset the path of a soul's progress. That joy—the joy of knowing that doubt, darkness, and the anguish of mental and moral conflict, are done with for ever—we shall realise when we can take up the song, “*For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.*” (2 Tim. iv, 6—8.) We must win our creed by mental conflict, we must win our crown by moral conflict; but the joy of God's salvation is tasted by those who feel that the great central truths, at any rate, are sure. “*I know whom I have believed.*” I have found the centre; to explore the circumference may be matter of danger, difficulty, suffering,

but hope lights the way, the sorrow can never darken into despair. Who that has braced his understanding for the work for which God inspired it, to search into the deep things of God's nature, His works, His ways, has not again and again, as he found himself beaten in the quest, broken out into thanksgiving, "Well, one thing is clear to me, let what will be dark,—*'I know that my Redeemer liveth.'*" I have an ark to return to when weary with wandering, a rock on which, when pressed by doubts and dreads, I can rest." Thank God in Christ, you whose spirit can rest while the intellect explores. You are not like a swimmer swimming for your life in a wild, wide sea, whose every stroke is agony, as he peers through the darkness and sees no hope of succour. A boat and a sure pilot attend you in your strivings, to receive you, when exhausted, to rest. It is an awful thing when a man has to wrestle with the intellect for every truth which is dear to his conscience. The mind's battles lose all their bitterness when the soul has found rest in Jesus. We know then we have the heart of truth; the body we shall find here or in eternity. I might say much as to the high advantage of the man whose inquiry into the works or ways of God is helped, is lit, by a soul at peace with Him, at one with Him. There is hope of *his* knowing all things that it is good to know, who has already the mind of Christ.

4. The joy of having the Key to all the mysterious ways of Providence in the world.

God writes the records of His Providential government in ciphers. We know the cipher; it is a blank to others. To those who know God it is plain and clear. They live in the Father's house; to them all its arrangements and orders are no secret; they are familiar with all the modes of its life. To the soul well grounded in the conviction "*He doeth all things*

well," there is no mystery. This or that thing may be difficult to understand; but to him who believes, the mystery, at any rate, is dissipated—the full understanding will come in time. How deadly is the difficulty to those who have not found the key in the love of God in Christ, let these passages show:—"Then Job answered and said, *Even to-day is my complaint bitter: my stroke is heavier than my groaning. Oh that I knew where I might find him! that I might come even to his seat! I would order my cause before him, and fill my mouth with arguments. I would know the words which he would answer me, and understand what he would say unto me. Will he plead against me with his great power? No; but he would put strength in me. There the righteous might dispute with him; so should I be delivered for ever from my judge. Behold, I go forward, but he is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive him: on the left hand, where he doth work, but I cannot behold him: he hideth himself on the right hand, that I cannot see him.*" (Job xxiii, 1—9.) "*But oh that God would speak, and open his lips against thee; and that he would show thee the secrets of wisdom, that they are double to that which is! Know therefore that God exacteth of thee less than thine iniquity deserveth. Canst thou by searching find out God? canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection? It is as high as heaven; what canst thou do? deeper than hell; what canst thou know? The measure thereof is longer than the earth, and broader than the sea. If he be cut off, and shut up, or gather together, then who can hinder him?"* (Job xi, 5—10.) "*The writing of Hezekiah king of Judah, when he had been sick, and was recovered of his sickness: I said in the cutting off of my days, I shall go to the gates of the grave: I am deprived of the residue of my years. I said, I shall not see the Lord, even the Lord, in the land of the living: I shall behold man no more with the inhabitants of the world. Mine age is departed, and is removed*

from me as a shepherd's tent: I have cut off like a weaver my life: he will cut me off with pining sickness: from day even to night wilt thou make an end of me. I reckoned till morning, that, as a lion, so will he break all my bones: from day even to night wilt thou make an end of me. Like a crane or a swallow, so did I chatter: I did mourn as a dove: mine eyes fail with looking upward: O Lord, I am oppressed; undertake for me. What shall I say? he hath both spoken unto me, and himself hath done it: I shall go softly all my years in the bitterness of my soul. O Lord, by these things men live, and in all these things is the life of my spirit: so wilt thou recover me, and make me to live. Behold, for peace I had great bitterness: but thou hast in love to my soul delivered it from the pit of corruption: for thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back. For the grave cannot praise thee, death can not celebrate thee: they that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth. The living, the living, he shall praise thee, as I do this day: the father to the children shall make known thy truth." (Is. xxxviii, 9—19.) But we know "that all things must work together for good to them that love God." And we believe that God forsaketh not the world in all its agonies and perils, for which the Lord Jesus died. "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not, with him also, freely give us all things?" "Then let not your heart be troubled," saith the Saviour. We can even take these sorrows, and make them into joys. "We glory in tribulation also; for the trial of our faith being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, shall be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ."

5. The joy of victory over death.

Hades—the unseen world—was to the ancients a land of

gloom and cold. They dreaded to speak of it, to think of it, and the dread of it is on man's natural heart. It is an awful thing to look upon the face of the dead. Where is the spirit which a moment since shone out of those eyes and spoke by those lips; whither has it borne its powers, its strength, its weakness, its sins, its destinies? And then we understand that *we* have one foot in the grave, that *we*, too, are of two worlds. The most dread moment of our experience is before us—every one of us. We may have mastered many agonies; we have yet to wrestle with the agony of death. There is a great shock, a great pain, a great horror to the natural mind, before us in the future, gay as we are now, glad, thoughtless, filling the sunshiny air with songs. That great, black terror has to be faced, and faced alone. Tender hands have sheltered you through all your early conflicts; a brave and tender heart has always, it may be, been ready to fling itself between you and the shocks of fate. But there the dearest must leave you; alone you must then face your destiny. Ah! what joy, what rapture in the assurance, that for you, as the dear forms of earth grow dim, a grander, more beautiful, more glorious form will come shining through the gloom. Already He has sent His strong, cheering words to herald His advent: "YEA, THOUGH I WALK THROUGH THE VALLEY OF THE SHADOW OF DEATH, I WILL FEAR NO EVIL; FOR THOU ART WITH ME; THY ROD AND THY STAFF, THEY COMFORT ME."

"O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord." (1 Cor. xv, 55—58.) The joy of a victory over death. For us death is slain, the grave is buried.

" Oh! if my Lord would come and meet,
 My soul should stretch her wings in haste;
 Fly fearless through death's iron gate,
 Nor feel the terrors as she passed."

" Absent from the body, present with the Lord."

6. The joy of living union with God, with Christ, with all living and blessed beings, eternally.

What is that world? What its speech, its habit, the forms of its life? We know not. The veil hangs over all these. "*Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.*" (1 John iii, 2, 3.) "*We know;*" for He is there—the God-man glorified; and the God-manhood glorified, through trial, suffering, and death, is the key to the life of eternity. "*This we know;*" for we see Jesus. We can wait to know more till we see him unveiled in heaven. We know that for those who are saved with His salvation God has laid up that "*which eye hath not seen, and ear hath not heard, and heart of man hath not conceived.*" To them He prepares to unfold eternally all the treasures of His wisdom and His love. Fair and grand are the things which here we are permitted to look upon and to connect with our Father's hand. The splendour that floods the world when the midsummer sun is reigning in the zenith, the serene and tender beauty which glows in the air when the young moon lifts her cresset above the woods—but I know that these are but the earthly images of the heavenly things which abide before the Saviour, and which the eye purged of its films by death alone is able to behold. Wonder not that there have been some so ravished by the thought of what it is to be in the Saviour's presence, that they have cast loose the

bonds which chained them earthwards, and stood attent, eager to catch the heavenly summons, "*and depart and be with Christ, which is far better.*"

These are the joys of His salvation, and now they are freely offered to you by the Gospel—"Ho ! every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters !" And now go home and sell them if you can, if you dare, for the fumes of the wine-cup, the kisses of a harlot, the pleasures of the world, or its dirty gains. David was mad to indulge his passions, and sold the joys of salvation for the embrace of an adultress, and the devil gave him as a makeweight the dishonour of his name, the discord and desolation of his house, and the murdered corpse of his friend. You know what these joys of the world are worth to you. There is truth in the old fable ; the monks believed that the devil might always be known by the smell of brimstone he left behind him. And you know how these pleasures taste when they are over—what heartache, misery, agony of soul, a course of this world's pleasures leaves to its votaries as the aftertaste. Now resolve to have done with it, and done with it for ever. Take in your hand now the riches that add no sorrow, the joy that leaves no aftertaste of pain ; and let the "*joy of the Lord be your strength*"—strength for duty, strength for making known to others the joys of salvation God has given you as your portion. If you want to kill them, keep them to yourself, brood over them selfishly, think with sleek satisfaction, "I am safe, at any rate, how many soever Satan may sweep into the pit." That state of mind will kill the joy at the heart. If you wish to keep, communicate ; if you wish to be joyful, utter your joys abroad. "*Then,*" says David, "*will I teach transgressors thy ways, and sinners shall be converted unto thee.*" The joy of Thy salvation is a joy which makes me long to infect others. It is not my salvation, it is God's salvation, and claims—and I will glory in making known the claim—the whole human world.

AIDS TO THE DEVELOPMENT
OF THE
DIVINE LIFE.

BY THE
REV. J. BALDWIN BROWN, B.A.

No. VI.
GOD'S GUARDIANS OF THE POOR.

"He gave . . . pastors and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints for the work of the ministry."—EPH. iv, 11, 12.*

If we rightly understand them, a flood of bright light is shed on the nature of the ministry and of Church membership by these words. A saint is to be a "minister." The office of the pastor and teacher is to perfect him for his work. A "minister" is not a "preacher," but a "helper;" one whose life is to be a ministry to the world; even as *"the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto but to minister, and to give His life as a ransom for many."*

And now let me address to you who are Church members a few frank words. For generations past the saint has been in the habit of thinking of himself as a person to be ministered

* I am of course aware that the exact relation of the clauses in these verses is much disputed. There is difficulty in settling the relation of the clauses in which *ἐκ* is used with that in which *πρός* is used. I believe that I have given the real connection; and the objection that it necessitates a too wide rendering of the word *διακονία*, seems to me to beg a question upon which there is very much to be said.

unto; one who had a minister whose business it was to look after him, to visit him, to comfort him, to cheer his sick bed, and to open to his dying eye the vision of the mansions of the blest on high. The saint has long been in the habit of considering that he had a clear right to a certain amount of this ministry from his pastor and teacher, and that if he failed to get it he was a very ill-used man indeed.

My concern here is not with the duties of the pastor and teacher—the measure in which it may be possible for him, having due consideration for study, meditation, prayer, communion with the highest minds in literature, and with the poorest and most ignorant minds in the world around him, to fulfil what may be expected of him by the members of his congregation, the “saints” of the church. But for them it is deeply important that they should understand that were the veil at this moment lifted, were ministers and church members summoned to stand before the tribunal of their Lord, the question to each one would be, not “When did your minister last see you, to cheer, to comfort, to guide you in the way?” but, “When did you last minister; when did that sick, suffering, ignorant one, within a stone’s throw of your own door, last see you, and learn through you what Christ can do for a sin-sick, suffering human soul?” We preachers are not your substitutes in the conscription of the great army of spiritual labour. We are your fellow-conscripts, the leaders of your labour, if you will; but our one grand mission is to perfect you, that is arm, equip, and inspire you for the work. Let me—

I. Present to you a contrast, which is often very painfully present to my mind—two pictures on which I pray you to look.

The Christians—the true members of all churches—are, as a class, distinguished by the possession of privileges

and powers of quite awful extent and height in comparison with the world outside. If you believe your profession, there is something utterly humbling in the sense of what you have in possession and prospect, which myriads of your fellow countrymen have not, though born like you under the broad shadow of the flag of an empire which accepts the Gospel as the basis of its constitution; born in your very parish, under the care of Christian pastors, and within sound of the church bells which rang sweet chimes to your infancy.

You are a priest and king in the ranks of the celestial hierarchy. You, here on earth, as you move about struggling with a load of cares, oppressed by a burden of weaknesses and sins, are the objects of a distinguishing love and tenderness, to the Great Father, to the Lord Christ in glory, which places you, here on earth, as God's sons, in the foremost rank of spiritual being, and will clothe you there with a glory, and crown you with a splendour, such as no highest archangel can challenge through eternity. Through life, in every sorrow, in each scene of darkness and dread, you are upborne by the assurance that that suffering, that anguish, are the work of the absolute wisdom, the absolute love, taking counsel for your eternal welfare. You are able, strong in this faith, not only not to whine in suffering like a beaten slave, but to rejoice, to burst out into a song of praise: "*I glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience: and experience, hope: and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.*" (Rom. v, 3—5.) "*For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.*"

(2 Cor. iv, 17, 18.) God and God's great universe, of which neither man nor devil can rob you, are your portion. "*All things are yours ; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come ; all are yours ; and ye are Christ's ; and Christ is God's.*" (1 Cor. iii, 21—23.) While for you the very veil of sense is parted, the very gates of the tomb are cloven ; glory streams through from the heaven beyond which Christ has won for you, and bathes with its splendour what the sad world has in all ages spoken of with bated breath, as the valley of the shadow of death. Your life becomes richer as it approaches the bourne which closes its mortal term ; and when you die it will be as a conqueror, not taking his rest, but passing up to his throne. "*I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith : henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day : and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.*" (2 Tim. iv, 7, 8.)

And now there are myriads, not only born in the same Christian land, but within the circuit of a mile from your own home, whose life is the dark contrast to all this. Pressed like you, more heavily than you, by the burdens both of sorrows and sins, with not one faintest gleam of light to irradiate the gloom, not one dimmest ray of hope to enable them bravely to endure. To them it is all bitterness and wrong. Tell them of God's love and wisdom, and they will laugh you to scorn. "Why am I, honest and industrious, starving ; and that villain there, who is living on the fruit of my industry, whom I know to be a cheat and a liar, rolls about in his carriage, eats off gold plate, and has the world, cap in hand, at his feet ? Go to—it's all wrong together. It's a bad world, and it has a bad ruler. I must bear, while I can bear, to see my wife and children starving, mind and body ; and then there is a short

way out of it all. Your immortality is a fiction of the priests." The more that man suffers the more mad he becomes against man—against God. He blasphemes fiercely the name which to you represents infinite solace and joy. As death draws near it is a black, foul shadow. • His flesh shudders and loathes, while his weary heart longs for it. One sharper pang, one sterner struggle, one choking gasp for breath, it is all over—he has passed out into the everlasting night.

And who maketh thee to differ? So far as man can see, whence this awful disparity? A disparity of experience, condition, destiny, under which, if we fairly realize it, the brain reels, the heart shudders. Into the secrets of the Divine counsel we may not look. "*The things which are revealed are for us and our children,*" and they are the clues to the things which are behind; just as the eye, the lines of the mouth, the form of the brow, are clues to what you can never get at directly, the nature of a soul. And what can we *see* of the origin of this difference? Much that partakes largely of the nature of privilege, and constitutes you a spiritually privileged class, in comparison with the great mass of your fellow men. In a broad way we all feel that it is of immense advantage to us, from the spiritual point of view, that we were born in Christian England, and not in Shanghai, Tartary, or Dahomey. Further, that our lot was cast in infancy and youth in a Protestant country, and not in Spain or Italy, where the tricks and vices of a priesthood have covered Christianity itself with scorn. But in England itself! How many of you, whom I am addressing, by no choice of your own, were cradled and nursed in the very bosom of the Church—a tender Christian nurture was yours. Your first act of memory was to shrine the Divine name, "My Heavenly Father," in numbers, which to your child's ear, at any rate, were melodious, and which will have a strange melody of their own (is it the tone of the

mother's voice which clings to them?) to your ear, when they linger in the last chamber of consciousness in death. Your very first lessons implanted a reverence for the Divine name, a belief in the essential Fatherhood, a deep conviction that this book is His word, which, little as you may be conscious of it, has borne you up triumphantly in many a scene of intellectual conflict about God, and His word, which has vexed your manhood, and has enabled you to murmur one of the deepest and largest prayers which ever broke from human lips, "*Lórd, I believe, help thou mine unbelief.*" You had rooted in your young nature that which has given you an overmastering advantage in all the spiritual conflicts which have issued in your renouncing the devil and his works, and avouching the Lord to be your God before the world. Be the scenes and circumstances of your early nurture what they may, there is not one of you who cannot trace a strange link of providential circumstances, in the ordering of which you can claim no part, in the influences which brought you to God. You look back, and see how all around you was wondrously leading and drawing you; you see with awe, how much you would have broken loose from, how much would have risen up to condemn you at the last great day, if you had denied the Lord your heart. And now, your poor brothers! How is it with them? The devil seems to have been as busy about their life from the first, as God has been about yours. The guardians, let us say rather the tyrants and destroyers of their young lives, were the devil's acknowledged servants—men and women who said deliberately to God, "*Depart from us, we desire not the knowledge of thy ways.*" The first music which rang in their infant ears, was the oaths, the blasphemies, the obscenities, of those dens of vice, crime, and ignorance, in which myriads of myriads of young immortals are born into God's world. The vision of life opened on them through the squalor, and foulness, and

filth, which vitiate the perceptions of the pure and the beautiful at their very springs. In a word, all around them in their young lives, makes it as hard for them to believe, as your Christian homes make it easy for you to believe, that a Fatherly hand is ruling the world. They grow up with a rooted antipathy to every association connected with Gospel, saint, or Church. They easily persuade themselves that it is all a huge conspiracy of the rich to manage and rule the poor. And while you would have to do violence to what is most deeply rooted in your being, to snap the tenderest bonds which bind your spirit, to trample on your parents' graves, if you forsake the Saviour, how many of your fellow men, chiefly, but not exclusively, the poorest, have to fight hard against all their most deeply rooted prepossessions, to fly in the face of all the influences of home and society, to forsake father, mother, sister, work, and bread, if they would even try to believe the Gospel. I am painting pictures of real life. There are those who will read these words, whose early life and culture I have described faithfully on the one hand; there are few of them who, in ten minutes, could not discover scenes where they would find every picture true which I have painted on the other. It is a dread, dread mystery. Human wisdom can never fully fathom it, here, at any rate. It is a mystery, under the burden of which human wisdom staggers, and not seldom drops, crushed down to black despair.

II. I know that the analogues of this are in nature and society. I know that it is but the spiritual aspect of the problem, the terms of which meet us everywhere. I know that there is a depth which none of us can fathom in the nature of the order which God has established in every province of the natural and human worlds. You find the prophecy of this mystery in the constitution of the creation; you find the very type of it

in that which is the key to the creation, the organization of the body of man. God's ways are equal in the creation, but it is not in virtue of any average equality of endowment and enjoyment. It is on a deeper scheme than this. There are the sunlit mountains, the golden plains, the foul marshes, in creation. The creatures are not all goodly to look upon, bright with the hues which have been caught from the morning's splendour or evening's glow, musical with songs which might be the refrain of the melodies that stream on the upper air from angelic voices. There are beautiful and base things, fair and foul things, things goodly to look upon, and things loathsome, which make the very flesh creep—creatures born to bask in the sunlight, creatures born to batten on corruption, to whom sunlight is torment, and the bright air of heaven is death. The human world but presents to us the problem in a higher and more difficult form. The princess, whose dainty foot never touches the damp ground; the shoeless beggar, who plashes all day on the wet stones, and huddles up in his wet rags under the arches of the bridge, or your warehouse entries at night; the educated savant, to whose eye all the countless glories of creation are familiar, whose converse with his intellectual peers is on themes into which an angel might desire to look; and the letterless city Arab, whose books are the city stones, with no sermons in them, whose haunts are the kennels and sewers, whose only litanies are curses, whose converse, such as might move the very devils to shame. I say the problem meets us everywhere. But its difficulty becomes greatly enhanced when we study it in man. Man's consciousness complicates it terribly. Man can reflect, and ask himself about the justice of all this; he can envy, hate, revenge. Well might the deep hearted thinker, who had been directed by the smirking Epicurean to the starry heavens as a refuge from the thought of the horrors around him here, say,

as the idea crossed him, "They may be all like this," "It's a sair, sair sight." But no; "begone unbelief." It is a good sight, could we see it all. Dark as it all is, we shall say, "He hath done all things well;" when we see the results of this richly varied culture, this action and reaction of class on class, condition on condition, privilege on privation, in the sunlight of the higher world. But the question assumes its most intense form when we look at it in the spiritual aspect which I have endeavoured to present to you. It must be so. The spiritual is the head of the natural; and the one thought which runs through the whole world of natural and human existence, must display its complete form in the spiritual condition and relations of mankind. As the head explains the organization of the body, the Church in its functions, relations, and duties, explains the whole method of God in the constitution and government of the world. It is but a part that we can see, and that through a glass darkly; but it is the most essential part; the rest will explain itself in time. Nature, the world, and society, are full of what we may call privileged classes; and I say there would be no key to the problem, all would be black as the Egyptian darkness, if we could not see.

III. That the privileged are privileged not to have, hold, and enjoy, but to serve, minister, and diffuse themselves in blessings around.

"*Nothing liveth to itself*" in nature, "*nothing dieth to itself*." The most lustrous, the most beautiful things, have this eminent honour, that they live to gladden and lighten the rest. The breach of this order has been the source of the whole bitterness of that suffering which is the monochord of the life of this world. The privileged—the eminent in endowment, position, and power—living to themselves, have never failed to be the curse and canker of the community which

they were set to bless as sunlight; and have never failed in the end to be struck down to the dust by the righteous vengeance of that community, and compelled to expiate the wrong by such miseries as the history of earth hath no records of beside. The horrible passages of history are the records of the hours when the privileged classes, of whose self-seeking the age was weary, have been struck down by the outcast masses, and left writhing and bleeding in the dust. And is it in the world's histories alone think you that such passages occur? The horror of horrors of history, is the siege and capture of Jerusalem, the hour when the Church—the Church of the living God, the Church set to be the light of the world, and His missionary to the ends of the earth,—could be endured no more, for sin and self-seeking, even by its patient and merciful Lord, and was abandoned at last to a doom the tale of which will cause men's cheeks to burn and ears to tingle to the very end of time. And this was no accident, God willed it so (see Deut. xxviii, 47—61). The history of the suppression of the Knights Templar at the end of the thirteenth century, repeats, on a small scale, the same dread lessons. On none does God inflict a retribution so awful as on those who, having been set by Him in the high places of privilege, have failed to make them high places of duty, beacons of guidance, sources of illumination and benediction to the world. The Church exists for man, for humanity at large; because man is comprehended in the large love of Christ, and in the counsels of redemption which, from eternity, looked on and embraced mankind. “*God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son.*” “*For God sent not His Son to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.*”

Let the Church live to impart, let the saint understand his vocation to minister, and we begin to have a glimpse of the order which God is seeking to establish amid the discords,

complications, and confusions of society. Let the Church member consider that his great duty on earth is to care for his own spiritual edification and comfort, and to strain on his thoughts to eternity, caring but casually for the mass of festering misery and corruption around him here, and there is no solution to the problem. If that be God's idea of the Church, there is no vindication of God's ways. One hears sometimes with a touch of righteous impatience, not to say scorn, Christian people talking to each other of "enjoying their privileges," "enjoying a ministry," "enjoying the ordinances," and the like. It is well, if the joy break out into duty; and in a world like this that is not altogether joyful work.

"The Son of God in doing good,
Was fain to look to heaven, and sigh;
Nor can the heirs of sinful blood
Seek joy unmixed in Charity."

I know not why we should ask so much for enjoyment in duty in a world which had nothing but a cross for the Lord. Value the ministry that stirs you to work; that presses right home upon the spirit the duties, the high responsibilities, which its high vocation entails; that makes you understand that you are a limb of the body of Christ, an organ thrilling ever with the expression of His tender pity, His yearning compassion, for the lost, sin-sick, heart-weary world. Take that burden fully on you. I do not know that it will add much to your enjoyments; but I know it will add rich elements of blessedness to your being, and will lift you to a loftier level—a nearer presence of the Saviour, a larger kingdom, a brighter glory, through eternity. But unless every member of the Church, which His body, His organ and instrument in the world, stirs himself to minister; and is seeking in all ordinances

and influences which the sons of this world share not, not enjoyment only or chiefly, but strength and stimulus to go out among them, and to lay hold on them in Christ's name, and bring them in to be sharers of his blessedness and hope, then is the order of God's government confounded utterly, the light of God's great love is dimmed, the outcasts are left to scoff and blaspheme over the wrongs of life, which ministry—and, like mercy, ministry remember, is twice blessed, "it blesseth him that gives and him that takes"—was set by God to cure. Here is a deeper remedy for human errors than is usually recognised. It is not suffering which men dread; it is not hard work and hard fare. It is suffering unsoothed by sympathy, it is toil uncheered by hope. Give a man sympathy and hope, and you will not find him moaning over what he endures. And sympathy and hope is what Christ sends *you* to supply.

There is an alley, say with twenty houses, crammed in every room with poor. There is vice, blasphemy, sickness, misery enough there to make an angel's heart ache—nay, it was heart-ache over such scenes that brought the Lord from His throne to die. Let a Christian man or woman go into that, thoroughly resolved to minister to it, to instruct its ignorance, sympathise with and soothe its suffering, teach it industry, cleanliness, and frugality, and fill its heart with the sense that God cares for it, cares with an earnestness for which words have no measures whether it lives or dies—a care whose only measure is the life and death agony of his Son—and then the bitterness will pass at once out of its suffering, the sense of wrong, the agony of spirit which blasphemes in its pangs, the dumb despair which paralyses the motion of the spirit, is gone from it: the lot may be hard still, penury enough, sickness enough, ignorance enough, but there has already commenced a purging of the moral atmosphere, the poorest and most wretched then begin to believe it possible that this may be, after all, a sunlit and

heaven-ruled world. God's answer to the agonising cry of the world's guilt and pain is the ministry of Christlike spirits. Make this abundant, and the dark problem, the darkest of all dark problems, begins to develop a solution, and Christ's body, the Church, becomes what He was, the great justifier of the ways of God to man.

Ministry, this willingness and power to impart, to irradiate, light, joy, blessing, on all around them, was the grand secret of the marvellous successes of the Church of the Apostolic age. There were wretched ones enough there in Jewish society. The old brotherhood of the Jewish people was a mere tradition—the thing was broken up for ever. The poor writhed in the dust under the rich Pharisee's tyranny. "*Thou wast altogether born in sins,*" the only benediction they ever listened to. "*God, I thank thee that I am not as other men are,*" the only liturgy they ever heard. There were bruised hearts and broken spirits there moaning over the insoluble problem, and asking "Is there real gladness for any spirit in any world?" But when they saw the brotherhood of the Church, they rejoiced exceedingly. They felt the glow of the Christian's joy, and they glorified God; they felt that He had visited his world. The darkness which had hidden His ways from their poverty and penury was scattered, a flood of sunlight streamed over it all. "Let us have brotherhood; let my heart beat against thy heart, my brother! in its pain and fever, and we can bear and hope together, and believe in the loving kindness of the Lord." And so the record was written. "*Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles. And all that believed were together, and had*

all things common; and sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need. And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved. . . . And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all. Neither was there any among them that lacked: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, and laid them down at the apostles' feet: and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need. And Joses, who by the apostles was surnamed Barnabas (which is, being interpreted, The son of consolation), a Levite, and of the country of Cyprus, having land, sold it, and brought the money, and laid it at the apostles' feet. . . . And by the hands of the apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among the people; (and they were all with one accord in Solomon's porch. And of the rest durst no man join himself to them: but the people magnified them. And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women)." (Acts, ii, 41—47; iv, 33—37; v, 12—14.) I am not speaking of the charity of the Church in its modern sense, but of its love. You may tithe your income twice over in giving, and be before God and man a niggard still. Mere givers are abundant; some love the pomp of giving, some the flattering unction which it lays to their hearts. But "the liberal eye," "the open hand;" these mean something different. Why are these dwelt upon so earnestly in the Scripture? "*Thou shalt open thy hand wide to thy poor brother, thy stranger, and thy needy in the land.*" This is the strain of the Divine exhortations. Why? but because the spirit which would open the hand to the utmost, yea beyond the utmost, is the one full witness for God's charity in the

world. This is the only charity which chimes in with His. Let this flow freely through the choked channels of the social frame, and stir its languid pulses, and the problem is solved. "Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God, Almighty; just and true are all thy ways, O thou King of Saints," will be the joyful testimony of mankind. I have often thought that, next to the apostolic, the purest and most Christ-like Church ever gathered in one spot was that Church of the exiled Independents, over which John Robinson was pastor, at Leyden; a Church which God honoured as no Church before or since has been honoured, by committing to its hand the *effective* colonization of the New World. In the year 1621, when the colony had survived the terrible privations and sufferings of their first winter, Robinson sent Mr. Cushman to bear this charge to them. I think it ought to be written in red letters in all our Church books; it is the rubric of the Independent Churches.

"And now, brethren, I pray you remember yourselves, and know that you are not in a retired, monastical course, but have given your names and promises one to another, and covenanted here to cleave together in the service of God and the King. What, then, must you do? May you live as retired hermits, and look over nobody? Nay, you must seek still the wealth of one another, and inquire, as David, How liveth such a man? How is he clad? How is he fed? He is my brother, my associate. We ventured our lives together here, and had a hard brunt of it, and we are in league together. Is his labour harder than mine? Surely I will ease him. Hath he no bed to lie on? Why, I have two; I'll lend him one. Hath he no apparel? Why, I have two suits; I'll give him one of them. Eats he coarse fare, bread, and water, and I have better? Why, surely, we will part stakes. He is as good a man as I, and we are bound each to other, so that his wants must be my

wants, his sorrows my sorrows, his sickness my sickness, and his welfare my welfare; for I am as he is. And such a sweet sympathy were excellent, comfortable, yea, heavenly, and, is the maker and conserver of churches and commonwealths, and where this is wanting ruin comes on quickly."

We are far enough from this in these days; and, practically, the Church is far below this ideal of its life in any age. Even those to whom Mr. Cushman spoke lived out but poorly the spirit of his noble words. But let us keep the idea before us, let us adopt it as our aim; let us understand that God has committed the poor to us; Christ has bequeathed them by His Testament to our charge. Others may excuse themselves from any constant and persevering ministry to their needs, on the ground of their ingratitude, their thriftlessness, their follies, their sins; but we dare not hold ourselves excused. Christ did not, does not, hold Himself excused from ministry to us on these grounds; He perseveres, and hopes through them all; and through all we are bound to hope and persevere. Our work is to radiate the spirit of His ministry, and thus take up and solve the problem which the world lays down in despair. Remember that mere benefactions are the very smallest elements of the ministry which is committed to us. He who can bring most brotherly love to bear on the condition of the needy and the relations of the classes, is best fulfilling his high ministry as "Christ's guardian of the poor."

AIDS TO THE DEVELOPMENT
OF THE
DIVINE LIFE.

BY THE
REV. J. BALDWIN BROWN, B.A.

No. VII.
THE TWO BANDS.

"And now I am become two bands."—GENESIS xxxii, 10.

THE words of the world's great ones have always a fulness of meaning which they themselves but imperfectly understand. Jacob was uttering the praises of a glad heart over his enlarging substance. Did he know, then, how his possessions stretched into two worlds? "Two bands" his eye saw before him, and his heart swelled with an honest pride and bounded with an honest joy as he gazed on them. Did the inner eye sweep round a wider horizon, and discern the two bands which were severed only by the Jordan of death? We cannot tell. He was a man of singular thoughtfulness, of a meditative, not to say melancholy temperament; a man who, while Esau lived in the present, and felt keenly that present pottage to a starving man was better than any amount of prospective spiritual good, had prescience of the future; could serve long years for a dear companion, and wrestle the long night through for a word of blessing from God. He was a man who believed in things not seen as yet, and lived for them—a true patriarch pilgrim, a man whose salvation was hope. How far he saw we can none

of us measure; how much deep gratitude for the past, and deep hope for the future, the eternal future, was breathed out in the words "*With my staff I passed over this Jordan, but now I am become two bands,*" none of us can tell. We are fond of saying that the patriarchs saw but little light beyond the limits of the visible world, that their hope of immortality was feeble, their vision of eternity dim. That it was not in broad sunlight there can be no question. "*Life and immortality were brought to light by the Gospel.*" But that there were moments when the unseen realities seemed lit with a gleam of heaven's own sunlight, when they came forth out of the mists and became supernaturally clear, is I think as plain. Familiar these things could not be, but *real* they were; perhaps those men had an awful sense of their realness which our familiarity destroys. But, be that as it may, Jacob had, I believe, very solemn realizing thoughts about what might be behind the veil, through which his pilgrim fathers had passed on their way to possess the promise with which earth seemed but to mock them, on high. That world could be no shadowy world to his spirit which had received such pilgrims to its bosom—into which the men who had the promises, but had touched nothing of their gift, passed as into the "better country, that is a heavenly," as the real home of their souls. I think that belief in immortality was not dim, that the hold on it was not feeble, in such men as these. "*By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise. For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.*" . . . "*By faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three months of his parents, because they saw he was a proper child; and they were not afraid*

of the king's commandment. By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward. By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing Him who is invisible." (Heb. xi, 8—10; 23—27.) Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Rebekah, where were they? These all died in faith; evidently on the threshold, not at the end of their glorious career. And had not the angels of God ascended and descended on his faithful head that night when he first went forth from his father's house a pilgrim, when he, the man who had the birthright, began to tread his forefathers' round of exile, hunger, and pain? And had not the angel hosts met him at Mahanaim, and welcomed him back to the land from which, angel-led, he had gone forth; and did not one, *the* angel, the angel of the covenant, meet him at Peniel, one in whom the powers of the world to come were revealed to his sight and touch; did he not wrestle the night long with that angel for a benediction, which left him a broken cripple for this life, a prince of God through eternity? Feeble vision of the invisible! dim knowledge of immortality! Perhaps these men had so little to say about it, because they had never dared, as we have, to question it; they cared to demonstrate it, or prate about it, as little as we about the vital air, the kindling sunlight, the providence of a father's wisdom, the tenderness of a mother's love.

But Jacob was to have a deeper and more vivid apprehension of it before long. His Rachel was with him there—the mother of one of the bands he led. Rich in possessions, rich in children, rich in love—love which the years had purified and consecrated, love in the strength of which he had been able for long years to toil and wait—he recrossed the Jordan; but he

was to become richer soon; "*Now I am become two bands*" was soon to have a deeper and holier meaning—the man who had grown into two bands as the pilgrim of earth, was soon to enlarge the sphere of his possession, and head the two bands in the two worlds. "*And Jacob called the name of the place where God spake with him, Beth-el. And they journeyed from Beth-el; and there was but a little way to come to Ephrath; and Rachel travailed, and she had hard labour. And it came to pass, when she was in hard labour, that the midwife said unto her, Fear not; thou shalt have this son also. And it came to pass, as her soul was in departing, (for she died) that she called his name Ben-oni: but his father called him Benjamin. And Rachel died, and was buried in the way to Ephrath, which is Beth-lehem. And Jacob set a pillar upon her grave; that is the pillar of Rachel's grave unto this day.*" (Gen. xxxv, 15—20.) . . . How the memory clung to him let his dying words declare. "*And as for me, when I came from Padan, Rachel died by me in the land of Canaan in the way, when yet there was but a little way to come unto Ephrath: and I buried her there in the way of Ephrath; the same is Beth-lehem.*" (Gen. xlviii, 7.) The pilgrim patriarchs for generations had no possession in the land of promise but a grave; they laid their dead there, and consecrated it for their children, the living spirits they sent on before them, to take possession of their true home-land and to await them there. Our sepulchres consecrate earth for us; that is the one holiest spot of earth in the estimation of all peoples—the field where they have laid their dead. Our living consecrate heaven for us, it is the one homelike spot in the universe for us—the place where they are gathering, gathering fast. "*In the father's house are many mansions*"—they are making a home there to welcome us.

"There our best friends our kindred dwell;
There God our Saviour reigns."

"With my staff I passed over this Jordan, now I am become two bands."

I. The contrast here presented between the early loneliness and poverty of life and its growing riches, is universal.

There is no creature born into this world more feeble, helpless, possessionless, than the human infant; more absolutely, abjectly dependent upon the loving care and ministry of others. There is no being in this great universe, no, not the chiefs of the angelic hosts, so rich, as the man who bears up the treasures of a well-spent godly life through death into the mansions of eternity. Once the weakest, poorest creature in the universe, and then the richest and the strongest—and the link between them a godly life. Godliness makes man's life, like God's thought, a progress, gathering riches and lustre as it travels; ungodliness makes it like the life of perishing nature, a circuit; it emerges from the darkness, seems to grow rich and strong for the moment, but sinks down again into beggary, misery, and everlasting night. The righteous hath hope in his death, to him it is the gate of an endless progress and expansion; the wicked hath sorrow and dread, for to him it is the way back into Chaos, and the blackness of darkness for ever.

But what is life but a constant gathering of riches? The child is rich in the love and ministry which he has a right to claim, but poor in independent power, independent possessions, independent friends. The work of life is to win them, to lay the hand on the things that are needful for the nurture and culture of the being, and to lay the touch of the heart on the persons whose love and communion it demands by those sure instincts which never fail. Compare the man and the woman of forty with their childhood. They have made themselves a name and a place in life; they are centres of attraction to troops of friends; they have little ones perhaps growing up in their homes who pay

to them that reverent obedience which they pay to their Father God. They have furnished their minds with stores of knowledge, the universe has opened up its secrets, the past is peopled with heroic shapes, the future with visions which the eye of faith alone is strong enough steadfastly to behold. How rich has life become to them, how full its storehouses of knowledge, power, and love. Trace it on; at seventy, the puling, helpless, possessionless infant, has grown into a patriarch, whose white hairs are a crown of honour, before which all men joyfully bow. The sons and the daughters have each grown into a band of children; and little infants, of whom he has all the joy and none of the care, come climbing around his knees, and twining soft throbbing tendrils around the boughs of his strength, lending to his age the grace and the charm of youth again. His wisdom has grown ripe with large experience, his affections and sympathies rich with frequent ministries, he fills the place of a prince in his circle, and when he falls, a wide company of men feels beggared for awhile by his loss. And the link between the two ends is uprightness—the godly uprightness, the uprightness of the man who has an eye heavenward, who looks up where he was meant to look to heaven and to God. But of all the treasures which a man can gather, there are two which are transcendent—knowledge and love; and of these the supremely excellent is love. That which is stored *in* the mind, that which is stored *in* the heart is the true treasure; the rest is mere surplusage. God gives it, but the devil can steal it. The man who has it is none the richer, the man who loses it is none the poorer, in the estimations of the heavenly world. There are men around us into whose lap fortune has poured her golden treasures with lavish hand; “they have more than heart can wish,” “their eyes stand out with fatness,” they have the world, cap in hand, at their feet. But they would give at this moment half their

fortune, how joyfully! to have the disciplined and well stored brain of that poor student whose cupboard is empty, and whose jerkin is threadbare; they would give it all, ten times over, to have the troop of children who fill that poor workman's home with their merry voices, or the throngs of friends whose benedictions haunt that genial spirit's modest fireside. To know and to love! These are the directions in which to seek our riches. Blessed is the man who has his storehouse full of them; these are the riches that bring no sorrow, "which moth and rust corrupt not, which thieves break not through to steal," which death despoils not, but only transfigures, and inscribes in the book of the treasures of eternity. And how to win them? "*My son, forget not my law; but let thine heart keep my commandments: for length of days, and long life, and peace, shall they add to thee. Let not mercy and truth forsake thee: bind them about thy neck; write them upon the table of thine heart: so shalt thou find favour and good understanding in the sight of God and man. Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths. Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the Lord, and depart from evil. It shall be health to thy navel, and marrow to thy bones. Honour the Lord with thy substance, and with the first-fruits of all thine increase: so shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine. My son, despise not the chastening of the Lord; neither be weary of His correction: for whom the Lord loveth He correcteth; even as a father the son in whom he delighteth. Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding. For the merchandise of it is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold. She is more precious than rubies: and all the things thou canst desire are not to be compared unto her. Length of days is in her right hand; and in her left hand riches and honour. Her*

ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace." (Prov. iii, 1—17.) This is life's secret; this the sphinx-riddle read. Whoso knoweth this hath life, whoso will not know it—will have none of God's counsel, must die the death, and his treasures must be scattered in the dust. There is no other way to make life a progress, but to root it in God. That which is rooted in Him, has the principle of everlasting growth, expansion, and widening riches, as the ages roll on; that which is rooted in nature only, in the will of the flesh, in the word of the world, must share nature's conditions, and return, like all that is born of nature, to the dust from whence it sprang, to shrivel, wither, vanish, in the final flame. "*I have seen the wicked in great power, and spreading himself like a green bay tree, yet he passed away, and lo! he was not; yea, I sought him and he could not be found. Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace.*" The law of increase, the growing riches of the years. Who cannot take up the song of Jacob, the burst of grateful thanksgiving? "*And Jacob said, O God of my father Abraham, and God of my father Isaac, the Lord which saidst unto me, Return unto thy country, and to thy kindred, and I will deal well with thee: I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth, which Thou hast shewed unto Thy servant; for with my staff I passed over this Jordan; and now I am become two bands.*" (Gen. xxxii, 9, 10.) Yes, but the growth may be ended in a moment, and all its increase may be gathered by death. This introduces us to—

II. The higher development of the law of increase, the deeper and more solemn sense in which, through the ministry of the angel of death, we become "two bands." I say the *angel* of death. Christ has stripped him of the cloak of terror which to man, the transgressor he wore; to man, the redeemed

child, his face has become as the face of an angel; God has made him the minister of the highest development, the most intense and most lasting joys. Christ "hath abolished death." Death, the executioner of judgment, is no more to those who are in Christ, to those who do not wilfully put from them the inheritance which He won. Death, the angel-guide into "the place which he hath prepared," remains with us; the most blessed, the most benign of the angels, whose commission is to guide us home. Death, as a physical experience, a transformation, a translation, a change of form and place, remains with us, blessed be God! "*for we who are in this earthly tabernacle do groan, being burdened.*" But there is nothing in this aspect to make him terrible; all that we know of the death which is around us in nature, and which physically we share still, though the spirit may be redeemed from its power, speaks to us of courage and hope. There is no destruction in the death of nature; nothing perishes, but that it may be reborn. All things die; "*ashes to ashes, dust to dust,*" is the legend on the brow of every creature; but that dust is sacred; God fails not to rebuild it in fairer forms, and to nobler use. The dead leaves of autumn are the cloak of winter, and the nourishment of the germ of glorious spring; no material is dissolved but that it may reappear in braver aspect; no type is broken but that it may be recast in more heavenly moulds. Through death there has been a constant progress in the forms and aspects of creation. The huge, coarse, unwieldy types, which ruled of old in both the animal and vegetable worlds, have vanished, and out of their ashes the young phoenix of creation has sprung, which is the meet satellite of man. And why should *we* fear it? Why should we dread that the law which rules through the whole sphere of creation should stop with man, and that death which transfigures nature—the butterfly is surely something like the transfiguration of the

worm—must despoil and devastate the human world? Why, but because man is a spirit, and his spiritual relations are supreme, and they, if they are out of harmony with God, make dread and discord through all his sphere. Man, the child of God, need dread death as little as the creature, nay, as he sees the glory to which it can conduct him, he can rejoice, exult in the prospect, and strain to the embrace of death, as a child strains to a mother's bosom, or a pilgrim of long years, returning, strains forward to his home. And this is the counsel of God; to make the darkness of death beautiful with us; to make it the one way home; to show us that the progress is not rounded, but prolonged and completed, and that the increase is not gathered, but consecrated by death as the possession of eternity. The great witness of this is the living God-man, the elder brother of the family, in heaven.

"Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself: that where I am, there ye may be also.

. . . Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God. . . . Then said Martha unto Jesus, Lord, if Thou hadst been here, my brother had not died. But I know, that even now, whatsoever Thou wilt ask of God, God will give it Thee. Jesus saith unto her, Thy brother shall rise again. Martha saith unto Him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day. Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life; he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this? She saith unto Him, Yea, Lord: I believe that Thou art the Christ, the Son of

God, which should come into the world. (John xiv, 1—3; xx, 17; xi, 21—27.)

Death is dead. *Life and immortality are brought to light by the Gospel.* “*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.*” (1 Peter i, 3.) This witness of resurrection, this demonstration of the eternal life of the believer, underlies all others. I am about to speak of many precious subsidiary, auxiliary proofs which God gives us, but remember they all rest on this, from the truth of this they draw all their power. And I say that God is daily abolishing death and completing His purpose of enriching us—making us heirs of two worlds—by gathering a band of dear ones, those whom our heart holds fast, on the further side of the river of death.

His great purpose is to make us live as the heirs of a heavenly kingdom, and bring eternity, the powers of the world to come, to bear on all that we do within the limits of sense and time. The man who lives for to-day, and seeks from the moment all his inspiration, and in the moment all his rewards, lives like a fool according to the Divine judgments: the wise man, the MAN, is he whose world is the great universe, and whose day is eternity. To bring heaven easily within our reach, God separates the bands—part have crossed the flood, part are on the hither side, approaching its margin, and the instinct of both tells them that they are one. Death is a revelation of life to those who can wisely look at it. Life never becomes earnest, sacred, solemn, as it was meant to be, until it has passed under the shadow of death.

I believe that a family lives but a half life as a family until it has sent its forerunners into the heavenly world. Until those who linger here for a time in thought can cross the river, and fold transfigured and glorious forms in the embrace of

their human love. A shadow on earth's sunlight is essential; else we might forget the banishment from Eden. The shadow of death in a home is the darkest of all earthly shadows. No agony like Eve's, Jacob's, David's, Mary's, when the joy of the heart, the light of the life, lay dead. But behind it, within it, let us say, if we fear not to enter the cloud, is the glory; the fullest effulgence of the Divine glory that shines out in this lower world: "*Said I not unto thee that if thou wouldst believe thou shouldst see the glory of God?*" And those who have watched by the death-bed of a noble Christian sufferer, who have seen how the powers of the world to come have possessed and sustained him, how his dying eye was ranging beyond the bounds of the world of sense, and was lit by a gleam that was caught from some sphere beyond our sight, and then watched the light fade from the eye, and the face settle into the awful but beautiful serenity of death, till it put on the aspect as of a warrior taking his rest on the breast of victory, have known a moment of joy which has hardly fallen short of transport, have seen a vision which we can name by no other name but glory, and have gone down to their common world again, like Moses, with the lustre still lighting their countenance, and with a sacred power to stir the depths in the hearts of their fellow-men. Those who know most of the higher aspects of death know most of the higher aspects of life. To them the common ground becomes sacred, for saints in heaven have trodden it; the common duties become holy, for they mingle the thoughts and energies of two worlds. If God has made a breach in your home circle, understand the loving reason—that He may make the one into two bands, retaining their oneness, and so marry the two spheres. The little home that has sheltered you in its sunny nook has expanded. There is one home now everywhere—those who are "bone of your bone and flesh of your flesh" are roaming

through the celestial spaces. How often, as you gaze longingly on those far stars, do they cross the line of your sight! How lovingly will they one day welcome you to its strangeness, and guide your steps through its unaccustomed paths. The joy of bringing you into their home will be one of their purest pleasures; they wait, they share the expectant attitude of the universe; God has prepared some better thing for them; they without you will not be made perfect.

The mother who has seen the awful pallor steal over the brow of her nursling knows then, and never till then, the sacredness of those who are left to her. She understands then that she has to train them for two worlds—no, one!—that godly life which is life eternal, and in which the two worlds are one. Nor will the aged pilgrim who has sent all his dearest on before him tremble when he stands on the brink of the river. His heart is wellnigh bursting with joy at the thought, "One gasp, one plunge, I shall fold them to my heart once more." Rachel came back to Jacob as he drew near the dark, rolling river. "There I buried Rachel," were among the last words on his dying lips. His eyes were dim with age, and the forms around him were fading; but I think I see them lighting with a strange lustre, flashing with a glorious joy, as he saw her across the river, and said to his heart—his lips moved, but none caught that inward word—"there I shall find her again, my living Rachel, and fold again her transfigured form to my heart of hearts."

But who assures it? How shall I know them? What forms do they wear? The dear familiar forms, or strange ones? The Lord's resurrection is the answer. The fact of His resurrection is the assurance of their resurrection, of ours; the familiar converse of the risen Lord with His human friends is the assurance of the familiar intercourse of those who have known and loved on earth, in the higher world. There are

those who talk drearily about a disembodied state, a sleep of the soul in serene unconsciousness until the morning of the resurrection. A soul never sleeps, and there is not in this universe a disembodied man. Man is an embodied spirit, a disembodied man is no man—a shadow, a ghost; and if the Lord aimed definitely at anything during the wondrous forty days which He spent in His risen form about the pathways of this world, He aimed at imparting the assurance that those who have passed through the veil are anything but bloodless, bodiless ghosts. If that wondrous history of the communion of the risen man with His friends has any definite meaning, it must mean that all that is deepest and richest in human relations lives on through death, that love reweaves its bands more tightly round those whom it clasps on the eternal shore. Precisely as we know the fact of immortality, we know the recognition of friends and kindred in the sphere of the immortals. Whole narratives of Scripture are instinct with it; deny it, doubt it, and believe, if you can, that God delights to mock our deepest longings, to frustrate our dearest hopes, and blot the most precious chapters out of the Word of God. But what forms do they wear? Perhaps not so unlike these, with all that mars purged out of them; not so unlike what we have seen in our loved ones, when the fret and the waste of life have passed, and their faces have caught a solemn and holy beauty, an ideal expression—all the possibilities of the nature expressed—through the transfiguring touch of death. That God has some fit tabernacle ready for the spirit, a meet organ of its intercourse with its fellows and the great universe, is plain from the necessities of things and the triumphant language of Saint Paul: “*For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house*”

which is from heaven : if so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked. For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened : not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life." (2 Cor. v, 1—4.) They wear the form, they wear it now, which fits them to mingle in the great congress of the first-born in the New Jerusalem ; though nothing even there as yet is final. The final form of the glorified spirit, the glorious body of the resurrection, still waits the developments of that last great day of God, the day when the great work of redemption shall have been completed—the day of the full and final manifestation of His sons.

"And then shall they be before the throne of God continually, and shall serve Him day and night in His temple." One band once more, met again, and met for ever. Hearts long sundered knit again in immortal fellowship ; the struggles of earth are its most sacred memories, the "far off interest of tears," won at last, its most precious possessions, while its consecrating priest is Death.

And who are the reunited ? *"What are these which are arrayed in white robes, and whence came they ?"* Whence that shining and jubilant company who are singing the song of Moses and the Lamb ? They are clothed in white triumphal garments ; they are crowned like kings, and they wear the palm. They are the conquerors in life's battles. They came through great tribulation, they overcame by the blood of the Lamb. *"He that overcometh shall inherit all things."* *"To him that overcometh will I give to sit down on my throne."* *"And who is he that overcometh the world but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God ?"* Have you sent some dear ones on before you, who have passed up by a shining track, whom you have watched to the very gate of heaven ? Ask them by what faith they conquered, by what strength they rose, by what right they reign ; and follow, if you would not make two

bands for ever—the breach of the faithful and the faithless through eternity—follow the steps of their faith to victory. Search for the rock they stood on, bow to the Saviour they served, take to you the weapons they wielded, fight in the field in which they won their victory, and meet them, when the fight is over, triumphant, and make the two bands one, complete, not one wanting, through eternity.

AIDS TO THE DEVELOPMENT
OF THE
DIVINE LIFE.

BY THE
REV. J. BALDWIN BROWN, B.A.

No. VIII.

“Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace.”—PSALM xxxvii, 37.

THE end of what—of the man himself, or of his discipline, his groanings, watchings, weepings, sufferings, sicknesses, and death? I do not think that David would have troubled himself to ask whether a man's end were a stormy or a peaceful one if it was the final end of him. What matters a gasp, a pang, a throb, more or less, if the final end, the oblivious darkness, is so near? We are wont sometimes to think and speak lightly of the thoughts which these men had of immortality. There are many illustrious proofs in the Old Testament Scripture that some of them, at any rate, had a firm and realising grasp of it. Hezekiah's song must not be taken as the gauge of the view which such men as Abraham, Moses, David, and Isaiah, were able to take of death and the immortality beyond. And to me it is one of the very grandest proofs of their faith in the great truth which was brought out into the clear daylight by the gospel, that they were able to speak of it as the crown of

a godly life that the end of it is peace. Who cares what the end is, if it is to be extinguished at once and for ever? Who ever cared to chronicle the dying experience of the brute? Whether it dropped—

“As an eagle on the plain
Drops, when the life deserts her brain,
And the mortal lightning is veiled again;”

or pined away through long, wasting sickness; or agonised for a few moments under the butcher's knife—who cares to write its history? It is but a few moments, more or less, be it of the worst agony that a creature can endure, and then it is over, and there is the long rest of annihilation to balance the account. Let us be sure that if the great ones of old could exult in the thought that the end of an upright man was peace, it was because they knew that that end was but a beginning—that the peace was prophetic—that the men who had thus ended their course with joy had reached the shore of the great ocean, calm, sunlit, infinite, over which lay their life-course of eternity, whose waves broke softly and lovingly at their feet. It was a man who, from some mountain summit to which his believing soul had climbed, could strain his gaze far over that broad and placid ocean of eternity, and who had lost for a moment the sight and the sound of the moaning and rushing life-river at his feet, who wrote these words:—“*I have seen the wicked in great power, and spreading himself like a green bay tree. Yet he passed away, and, lo, he was not: yea, I sought him, but he could not be found. Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright: for the end of that man is peace.*” (Psalm xxxvii, 35—37.)

There would not be much in his spirit in tune with Hezekiah's moan—the cry of a weak man in a degenerate age—when he had come forth from the near vision of death. We are

much too prone to take such words as his as the key to the thoughts of the wise and the great of old about eternity instead of the glorious inspiring words of David :—“ *I have set the Lord always before me : because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved. Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth : my flesh also shall rest in hope. For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell ; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. Thou wilt show me the path of life : in thy presence is fulness of joy ; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.*” (Psalm xvi, 8, 11.) “ *From men which are thy hand, O Lord, from men of the world, which have their portion in this life, and whose belly thou fillest with thy hid treasure : they are full of children, and leave the rest of their substance to their babes. As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness : I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness.*” (Psalm xvii, 14, 15.) Or the still deeper and more solemn utterance of Job, which struggles out of a sorely tried and, but for that hope, a desperate heart :—“ *O that my words were now written ! oh that they were printed in a book ! That they were graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock for ever ! For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth : and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God : whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another ; though my reins be consumed within me.*” (Job xix, 23—27.) And, now, brethren, “ *mark the perfect man, and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace.*”

- I. The character here presented for our study.
- II. What is prophesied of his end.

I. The character here presented :—“ *The perfect and upright man.*”

And this is in a book which declares that in "*many things we offend, and in all come short of the glory of God.*" "*That there is none good but one, that is God.*" "*That there is none that doeth righteousness; no, not one.*"

It is an interesting and important question, what is the Bible definition of human perfectness? What does the book mean when it speaks of a man as perfect and upright, while, on the other hand, it contains, and not sparingly, such passages as these? Do the words "*All have sinned*" admit of limitations? Does the Bible use these words vaguely and generally, allowing of certain exceptions from the universal charge? Does it allow that there are those on earth who are absolutely free from the taint of imperfection, in whom the evil one finds nothing by which he can lay hold of them and lead them into sin, while the great mass of their fellow-creatures round them are the confessed children of darkness and of the devil, on the way rapidly to their own place? Do we, as matter of fact, find these broad, absolute distinctions among men—a sinless class, palpably pure; a sinful class, palpably impure; sons of God and children of the devil, to be distinguished as clearly at a glance as midnight and noon?

I answer, in the first place,—

1. That the Scriptural term, "the perfect man," whatever it may import, does not set before us, at any rate, the model man of the imagination, as portrayed in fiction and song. The man of angelic qualities, who moves among his weak and sinful fellows as Una among the "salvage folk," as Arthur amid the intrigues and corruption of his realm, or as the angels among the reprobates of Sodom, or the Lord among the publicans and sinners of the world. Alas! for us, friends, if the only man whose end is peace be the man of ideal loftiness, purity, and nobleness; whose transparent soul is stained by no tinge of

evil, whose life is all lustrous with the radiance of benignity, virtue, holiness, and truth. The world holds not these model men. One it had, and one alone. We may dream of them, but we find them not around us here. The perfect man of the Psalmist was not a man shut off from us by a gulf over which we have no hope of passing; no angelic spirit dwelling serenely on eminent heights of holy meditation while we are left to struggle, suffer, and alas! sometimes grovel in the dust and darkness of this lower world.

2. The proofs of this are abundant in the Bible. Not one of its holy ones is a "model man." There is not one of them who did not prove by some great lapse his exposure to the temptations and experience of the sins which make up so much of the history of our lives. It will be enough to point to Job, David, and Peter as exemplars. Whatever be the definition of "the perfect and upright man," at any rate it must include these. The Lord bore witness to them that they were men whom he approved and loved. Of Job it was testified that he was "a perfect and an upright man," in the most explicit terms; of David, that he was "a man after God's own heart;" while Peter occupied the position of eminent honour under the new dispensation, and was marked by the special confidence of the great Head of the Church. And yet there are few passages in literature so terrible as the chapter in which Job curses his day, and dooms it to oblivion in a perfect frenzy of despair, hurling in the sharpness of his agony furious and almost atheistic defiance at God. Let any one read carefully the third chapter in the book of Job, and the earlier portion of the nineteenth, if he would understand the depths of unbelief and despair into which one named "perfect and upright" by God's own lips may fall. David at one dark moment became one of the world's chief sinners, as he was surely also one of the world's chief saints;

but his saintliness did not save him from being betrayed into a specially flagrant adultery, which he was tempted further to cover by the murder of his friend. Though about David's dark transgression let us say in passing, that we cannot be too thankful for the moral safeguards with which the manners, habits, and settled principles of Christian society surround us. We have helps against such daring and desperate sin as David's which were not within his reach. In an early and unsettled state of society men pass much more easily from the heights to the depths at a bound. We may almost say that society has made such advance since David's time that it would be impossible in these days for a man with one tithe of David's godliness to be betrayed into David's sins. But there they stand, Job and David, perfect and upright men, according to the express testimony of God. For—

3. God in estimating man and man's life, discerns what is hidden from us, the root out of which it springs, and is not shut up, as we are, to a casual and often imperfect observation of what appears on the surface of the life. He discerns the central core of the being; as that is to Him, the man is. If that be right with Him, the man is right with Him. There may be more or less of unruly passion to be tamed, more or less of practical grace or virtue to be developed, more or less of the natural man to be transformed into the image of the Saviour, but that which is radical in the heart, the deepest principle of its life, will display itself outwardly—the innermost will become outermost in time. "*As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he,*" and so he will be seen to be of all when his life course is ended, and the essential character of the man gives form and tone to the body, which will be at once the shrine and the organ of the spirit through eternity. What that is in the man which makes his essential character God sees clearly, man but dimly and partially, and His estimate of us

is based on the knowledge of what is deepest and most vital in us; He sees Christ formed in the heart of him who is but a child in faith, and beholding Christ's perfectness, justifies through Christ him who believes.

4. The essential principle of this perfectness of which David speaks is a heart right with Him, a life whose root and whose aim is God. And this marks out the Scripturally perfect man from the man of natural grace, goodness, and nobleness of character on the one hand, and the man of mere model perfectness, with all the virtues and none of the faults and stains, on the other. It is the man, with more or less of native beauty, goodness, and nobleness of nature, whose heart is right with God.

The underlying principle here seems to me to be this. There is very much that is naturally graceful, beautiful, pure and noble, in humanity. I do not believe that all eminent saints have been murderers in embryo, nor that the purest maidens, if madness unseals their lips, will utter terrible words of pollution and shame. There are dark diversities in men and women, in natural quality and tendency, the secret of which it is impossible for us to fathom; enough for us to know that "His ways are equal" who created and rules the world. There are beautiful natural features of character, there is much natural grace and goodness, around us here, and God does not refuse to recognise it. To Him we may well believe it is good and beautiful, with all the flaws which His pure eye discerns—good and beautiful as the verdure of earth, the breath of flowers, the splendour of stars, and all the grace and glory of the world. But to Him it is simply the blooming of the germs which He has hidden in the heart of man as well as in the bosom of the world; it is so far but the fruit of nature, which, beautiful as it is, fades and perishes, it lacks the life which makes it enduring and eternal.

All that is "natural" perishes. "*All flesh is grass, and all the glory of man is as the flower of grass; the grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away;*" God, and that which is born of God, alone is eternal. The glory of the natural virtues, fair as its promise may be, fades like the nature from which they spring. They only become real, living, and fruitful, in the highest sense, when they have sought for themselves a deeper root, when by faith they have connected themselves with Christ, and have become infixed in His life.

And this is the true human goodness and perfectness, the true glory of man, the partaking of the nature and life of the Lord. Man was not meant just to bloom fair and fragrant as a flower, according to the bent of its nature; he was made to aim at and attain a godlike perfectness, through the free activity of his intellect and will, which perfectness can only be sought and found by faith in God. The perfect man is the man who has received the stream of a Divine inspiration, and has the flow of a Divine life through his nature; the root of whose endeavours draws its nourishment from the fountain of God's grace in Christ, the flower of whose life seeks to unfold itself in the heaven of His light and His love. The man who has a principle to fall back upon when tempted, which is deeper and stronger than his own resolution; a power to recover himself when fallen, in the formed habits of godly action and the hopes of a glorious future, of inestimable worth; he cannot rest in the sty, though he may enter it for the moment; he cannot sink in the slough, though he may touch it with his foot; he has a purpose and a hope which connect themselves with God, which are redeeming, which are the hold of God upon him by which He uplifts and redeems his soul. The question is simply, what is the innermost thought, bent, and law of the heart? Is it God? To do God's will, to walk in God's way, to aim at God's ends, to come to God's home—this, where it lies but as

a germ in the heart, is the principle of perfectness, stains may blot, blemishes may mar, sins may defile the spirit; but there is that within which will conquer and purge them, and present the being faultless, stainless, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing—worthy to mix with the holy ones, white-robed, in the temple on high.

This is the essential principle of the perfectness. The extent of its manifestation is not the question; if the principle be there the manifestation will be a growing one, and will be visibly glorious at last. The grace, beauty, and virtue of nature get sadly dimmed by the wear and tear of a rough world like this; they soon show that they have no deep root, and are doomed to die. While "the righteous shall flourish as the palm-tree, he shall grow like the cedar in Lebanon." "The path of the just is as a shining light, which shineth brighter and brighter unto the perfect day." That which is innermost comes outermost through life's daily discipline, and it shines out at last with victorious splendour in death. And if to this essential heartrightness be added the grace of a high-souled, harmonious, and beautiful nature, there you have a spirit which I will not say is angelic—we have no right to suppose that there is anything like it among the angels, who have never been purified by discipline—but made like unto the Son of God.

I have known such—I have one in my mind's eye now. They leave a light behind them when they pass which reveals to us who knew them our own littleness, and how great, through Christ, we may become. A man "perfect and upright," whose integrity is inwoven with his very existence and is fed by his every breath; whose lofty superiority to all selfish motives, aims and ends, is as conspicuous as a planet in the midnight sky; who could not do a mean, base, tricky action, or take an unfair advantage of his rival, though a world were

the prize. And he can tell us why he could not. "*I have set the Lord always before me ; because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved.*" A man who amongst his companions and coadjutors has manifestly no selfish purpose to fulfil at their expense, and who is their wise, their trusted counsellor and guide ; for it is self which perverts judgment ; the selfish eye is inevitably a partial one, and he who can purge his sight from that humour of self-seeking has qualified himself most effectually for the service of his fellow-men ; one whose nature is so well compacted and balanced, and realises such a just harmony of all the faculties and qualities which make the rich endowment of man, that all find in him a vivid sympathy, and yet a soothing, purifying, elevating, and harmonising power ; whose soul being set on higher things than the men of this world strive after sees through all the petty ambitions of the moment, without scorn of those who aim at them, regarding them rather with a pitying love which may help to lift their contemplations to higher and more enduring things. A man who is just, "to the estimation of a hair," while generous to the verge of lavishness, yet not beyond it, that he may be the more largely generous ; conspicuously temperate, yet not abstinent, and therefore able to invest temperance with a grace and charm which extremes can never wear ; full of genial, playful tenderness, with a ready smile for all gladness and a ready tear for all sorrows of his friends ; flinging the veil of a delicate humour round all the roughnesses and acerbities of life ; with vivid interest in all that makes the life of this world worth the living, but with a calm, self-controlled aspect which looks beyond it ; saved from a too fond idolatry of the creature by the serene presence of heavenly and eternal things. I say I have known such a one, and marked him well, and the end of that man was peace.

One other word to complete the portraiture of the Scrip-

turally perfect man. He must be one whose outward professions and practices are consistent with the innermost beliefs, aspirations, and desires of his heart. There will be no hiding of the light which is in him, no suppression of the name of the God whom he serves and the Saviour whom he loves. The word which he believes he lives. Any withholding of utterance or profession weakens godliness unspeakably. The things which are precious to us ought to be held forth in our lives, our whole speech and work ought to be redolent of them, our closest associations should be with those who share our love for them, our great life work is to make them known to our fellow-men. No secret disciples of Christ can attain to this stature, can grow nobler, stronger, more peaceful, as the life sweeps on towards the bourne of death. It is the public habit of the life which gives boldness—calm, unwavering confidence—in that hour. Mark the perfect man—the man whose outer and inner life are welded into one—the end of that man is peace; peace, with a glow of glory round it, which marks the end of the earthly, the beginning of the heavenly, life. The sun which leaves a fading glory behind it here has risen and shines on superior worlds.

II. Having thus considered the Scriptural idea of the perfect and upright man, we will now study, though it must be briefly, what is prophesied of his end.

The end of that man is peace!

What is peace, and what are its conditions? It is surely not "the ignorance which is bliss;" the veiling of a fact which, if it crossed us, would startle and scare us; the hiding of the skeleton which they tell us is shut up in the secret chambers of every life. No man is at peace with God, or with himself, who is afraid to look all round him; who cannot contemplate all that is actual and all that is possible, with serene assurance

that they are all in the hand of One who is able and willing to make them work together for his good. A man sleeping on the edge of a lava flood is quiet enough ; a drunkard afloat upon a rapid, fascinated by the deep music of the waters which are sweeping him on to his doom, is something more than quiet, he may even sing and shout in a wild delirium of joy, but the reality will disenchant him, and soon. But "peace" is of far other complexion, and issues from far deeper springs. Two conditions, at any rate, are essential to it—certainty and hope. A man must know where he is and whither he is tending, and have a free, clear hope about the future, if he is to be at peace. And death is the trial of the certainty and the hope, it is the hour when the soul cries out for certainties, and strains on through the gloom for a vision of the reality beyond.

"Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright," when the last hour draws near, sustained as none but he can be sustained by certainty. and inspired as none but he can be inspired by hope. For—

1. He knows whom he has believed, and is persuaded that He is able to keep that which he has committed unto Him until that day.

His whole life has been the knowing Him, and when the last hour comes he has the whole experience of life to fall back upon. His whole life has been a trusting of that which is most precious to the Saviour ; he will not faint when he has to receive the deposit, and possess it through eternity. "Eighty and six years," said the old confessor, when they moved him to deny his Saviour, that they might save him from a terrible death, "eighty and six years have I served him, and he has never done me anything but good, and shall I deny him now, my Lord and Saviour? Lead on." What can shake the man who knows that the angel of death is the minister of

the Saviour, and that as the shadow deepens he is being drawn closer to the embrace of His love. No wonder that such a man remains calm and steadfast when all around are trembling and sobbing; no wonder that he can sustain and animate them, himself sustained and animated by Christ. Such calm assurance as he has that to die is to be with Christ, which is far better, a thousand grisly shapes of terror, with hell to back them, could not weaken, far less destroy. *"For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing. . . . At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me: I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge. Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me; that by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear: and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion. And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen."* (2 Timothy, iv, 6—8, 16—18.) *"For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven: if so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked. For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life. Now he that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit. Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord: (for we walk by faith, not by sight:)"*

we are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord. Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him."
2 Cor. v, 1—9.)

2. He knows to what he is passing—to a world which is brighter, a bliss which is deeper, than even his most vivid dreams. His life, remember, has been a longing—"even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of the body." He knows that groaning well—life has been one long struggle, one cry for deliverance, redemption, glory. Death is the one pathway to the end. He has long known it, and death has long been for him abolished by the vision of the glory that is beyond. To him it is not the outer gate of life, but the inner gate of heaven, the gate of its innermost and holiest joy. As earth fades, the vision brightens. "There! there!" I have heard them say as the vision of something beyond our sight flashed before their dying gaze; I have seen the eye kindle and the cheek flush with a strange exultation, and heard words of triumph murmur on their lips before they grew cold and rigid in death; and I have fancied that if we could but catch one gleam of what the Lord was showing them in that hour we should understand, as no words can make us understand, what the Psalmist meant when he said, "*Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace.*"

" Oh, could we die with those that die,
And place us in their stead,
How would our spirits learn to fly,
And converse with the dead.

“How we should scorn these clothes of flesh,
 These fetters, and this load ;
 And long for evening, to undress,
 That we might rest with God.”

3. The rest—and a man has other cares at such hours—he leaves. He believes in the Fatherhood of God. To him the words have an infinite meaning, and he builds on them in confidence, not for himself only, but for all that he holds dear. To be able, not nominally, but really and believingly, to trust the dear ones whom he can tend no longer to that fatherly love is an infinite solace ; to be able to cast the care on Him who he knows will care—care with a tenderness of which earth has no measures—is peace, the peace of God in the contemplation of the future of our beloved. What mad provisions men make for their dear ones ! What accumulated hoards, what careful dispositions ! In a year the lawyers have got it all, and there is left to the children nothing but a legacy of bitterness and hate. But to leave them to God, to be their guide as he has been ours—“Father, I leave them in thy hand, for they are thine,” this is peace, this is certainty, this is hope of a blessed reunion, in a home which shall be broken up no more by death. **“MARK THE PERFECT MAN AND BEHOLD THE UPRIGHT, FOR THE END OF THAT MAN IS PEACE.”**

“Jerusalem! my glorious home!
 Name ever dear to me!
 When shall my labours have an end,
 In joy, and peace, and thee?”

- “ When shall these eyes thy heaven-built v
 And pearly gates behold ?
 Thy bulwarks with salvation strong,
 And streets of shining gold ?
- “ O, when, thou city of my God,
 Shall I thy courts ascend,
 Where congregations ne’er break up,
 And Sabbaths have no end ?
- “ There happier bowers than Eden’s bloom,
 Nor sin nor sorrow know :
 Blest seats ! through rude and stormy scenes
 I onward press to you.
- “ Why should I shrink at pain and woe ?
 Or feel at death dismay ?
 I’ve Canaan’s goodly land in view,
 And realms of endless day.
- “ Apostles, martyrs, prophets, there,
 Around my Saviour stand ;
 And soon my friends in Christ below
 Will join the glorious band.
- “ Jerusalem ! my glorious home !
 My soul still pants for thee ;
 Then shall my labours have an end,
 When I thy joys shall see.”

AIDS TO THE DEVELOPMENT
OF THE
DIVINE LIFE.

BY THE
REV. J. BALDWIN BROWN, B.A.

No. IX.
HAVE FAITH IN GOD.

"Why sayest thou, O Jacob, and speakest, O Israel, My way is hid from the Lord, and my judgment is passed over from my God?"—ISAIAH xl, 27.

THERE was no man living at that time in Israel, or on earth, who had such reason to be hopeless as the man who wrote these words. Let no man, let no age, dare despair, if Isaiah, when those words were penned, was able to hold fast his faith in God. There is reason to believe that they were written early in Manasseh's reign. The last twenty-six chapters of his prophecies constitute one sublime poem, the grandest ideal poem in the world—Isaiah's Paradise regained. His other prophecies are fragmentary; state-papers, composed at various times, and as the varying circumstances of his people called for them. They have been arranged confusedly, without any regard to chronological order, though with some kind of reference to the subjects and the peoples with whose fortunes they concerned themselves. But these last chapters are a grand whole, composed as a whole, and having an internal unity as

deep and strong as the unity of any epic in the world's literature. They form the epic of Messiah's reign. I believe this work to have been composed in the early years of the reign of Manasseh. Hezekiah was buried with his fathers, and his reformation was buried with him. The brief gleam of splendour which lit the decline and fall of the Jewish state and church was shrouded in gloom again; and to the eye of the old prophet, who had been the author and mainspring of Hezekiah's reformation, the darkness was denser and drearier than ever—an Egyptian darkness, a darkness which might be felt. The picture of the times is drawn by a graphic hand in the twenty-first chapter of the first book of Kings. I believe Hezekiah to have been far too weak a man to originate and conduct a reformation; Isaiah was the hero of it, and he wrote its epitaph. Doubtless there was a crowd of courtiers who hated Isaiah while they fawned on him, who cursed his reformation while they conformed to it, and pleased themselves with visions of idolatrous orgies, and frantic revelries, which should repay the self-denials he had imposed on them, when the old hero's head should be laid helpless in the dust. The day came at length when the tide turned, and bore the brutal idolaters on its flood to power. It is probable that in the second year of Manasseh's reign the grand old prophet sealed his prophecy with his life-blood, under the savage sentence of the impious king. Jewish tradition tells the tale, that "*some were saved asunder*;" in the epistle to the Hebrews, is Isaiah's epitaph. But he lived to write this prophecy, to utter the sublimest words of hope and aspiration, to assert the eternal faithfulness of the Most High, the might of His hand, the purpose of His heart to redeem and glorify humanity, in words which for power and splendour are unmatched in the literature of mankind. I picture the aged man—fourscore years old—shutting himself up with his Bible and his God, shutting out

the blasphemies and obscenities which had usurped the air, and banished the hymns and litanies with which Hezekiah had filled it, and, far from abandoning his great hope, projecting it on the far future :—“ *For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given : and the government shall be upon his shoulder : and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.*” (Is. ix, 6, 7.) This he had been inspired to preach in the dark reign of Ahaz. Judaism might seem to perish, the world itself might seem to go to wreck, but nothing should kill the hope of the reign of that Divine Redeemer and King of Men, whose advent he had been commissioned to announce to the world. Earth may suggest no hope, the floods of evil are out, and they sweep every trace of a Divine reign ruthlessly away, but they do not sweep away God :—“ *Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall : But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength ; they shall mount up with wings as eagles ; they shall run, and not be weary ; and they shall walk, and not faint.*” (Is. xl, 26—31.)

If this picture be true, no man then living had such reason to feel worn and weary, sad and even desperate, as this man. And yet, I know of no work which is charged with a hope so profound and yet so elastic, a joy so buoyant and exulting, as this song of the aged seer, whose every earthly hope had withered, and who was watching the toils of his tyrants closing steadily round him, and dragging him to a cruel and bloody death. Verily, it is from the deepest wells men see the stars most brightly. The lowest valleys grow the fairest, freshest flowers, whose odours fling far and wide on the breezes the

breath of their beautiful and joyous life. The words of richest cheer are ever spoken to us by the men who by all human standards should be the most cheerless. It is not racks and flames, pestilent dungeons, stripes, or torments, which can kill the hope of a man who has learnt that man's hope—the world's hope, is in the living God.

I. Isaiah here reaches and rests upon the very foundations of the faith, trust, and hope of mankind—the living God.

Creation rests on His hand; man, the child of the higher creation, rests on His heart. That there is a mighty Divine hand behind and beneath all the apparent confusion of creation, the order of its disorder, the constancy of its change, the progress of its monotonous cycles, ruling the strife of its birth and death, its decay and regeneration, and holding in calm unswerving control the orbits of its stars, is the ground of our belief in the permanence of nature—the maintenance through days and nights, years, generations, ages, and milleniums, of the constitution which regulates the whole life of this lower world. We rest on nature with the most trustful assurance; no shadow of a doubt saddens our gaze on the sunset splendour, lest for the last time the glow of its glory was being flung over the wearied world. In truth we are resting on God. Our minds search behind the veil of the visible for a mind with which ours may claim kindred, to whose wise and benign decisions we can trust with an absolute confidence which no fortuitous concourse and concert of atoms could inspire. Beyond the fact, the ultimate fact of creation, the will of the living God, none of us can penetrate. We come here to the end of creation, an end which is endless; all our convictions, assurances, hopes, find there their ultimate foundation; they have no root, if they are not rooted in Him.

What His power is to the material universe, His moral

nature and character are to the spiritual universe. There the apparent confusion is worse confounded. The death struggle of good with evil fills the universe with the clang of conflict; the wailing of the vanquished, the shouts of the conquerors, the moanings of misery, the desolations of war, are ever before the eye and the ear of the angels and of God. This earth, the darling of creation, is the scene of the deadliest discord. The good seem to be born into it but to suffer and to die. The battle seems ever to end in the victory of the evil one. Reformations, revivals, fade after a brief lustre, and the night rarely fails to be denser than before. Those who will live for man, to lead him, to teach him, to purify him, to save him, must die for man, and what becomes of their work; with whom can they leave it, to guard and complete it? Is not the battle of truth and virtue a losing one, is not night the essential atmosphere of this material creation? It emerged from night once, is it not settling down to night again? No! No! No! Thus saith the living God:—“*O Zion, that bringest good tidings, get thee up into the high mountain; O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings, lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid: say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God! Behold, the Lord God will come with strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him: behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him. He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young.*” (Is. xl, 9—11.) There Isaiah rested, beyond that he could not carry it; there he must rest. The Lord liveth. “*The Lord reigneth, let the earth rejoice.*” This is the one ultimate answer of the Bible to all the questions which perplex and bewilder the intellect of man, the one solution of the mysteries which baffle his heart. “*Have faith in God.*” There are times when it is blessed to fall back and rest upon it, times when the intellect gives up in despair the effort

to trace the methods of God's mysterious ways with creation and with man. "I cannot understand. It is all a wild sea of confusion, which becomes denser as I gaze. But I believe in Thee, O, my God! Lord, help Thou mine unbelief. There is a living God above, beyond, beneath, all this; there must be a solution somewhere. He knows what He does, and why; that knowledge shall content me. Resting on Him I can suffer and wait in hope, a hope deep-rooted as His own being; indestructible as His own life. Let that faith fail me, and all around me is darkness—horrible, profound." The utter darkness is that in which a mind and heart are buried, when faith fails to furnish the key to the mysteries of nature and of life. But let us have faith, let us hold fast to the living God, and a thousand tender voices round us at once burst forth to guide and cheer. Creation lives by faith unconsciously, and all her voices to our intelligent ear iterate and reiterate "*Have faith in God.*" The heavens and the earth, the winds and tempests, the stars, the flowers, the fountains, the rivers, the great murmuring ocean, all join in the hymn of trust and hope, which to the believer becomes articulate, and fixes more surely his faith in God. If that be the deepest thing in a man's nature, if its roots reach where no fires of trial can reach them, where the keenest torments cannot search out and destroy them—that man is blessed. Blessed! though like Isaiah he has to reach his martyr's crown through a bloody and agonizing death. Isaiah, shut out from the present, compelled to leave that in the devil's hand awhile, wrote for the gloomy and dreary ages which he foresaw, when even the pious might fear that God had forgotten His promise and forsaken His world. And he spends a wealth of eloquence and earnestness unmatched perhaps in any literature, in painting the power and splendour, the truth and the faithfulness, of Him whom their faithlessness might be tempted to deny. (Read Is. xliii, 1—7.)

II. Have faith in God.

Yes! it is an easy exhortation, and soon said. But what do I know of God that I should trust Him? How know I that this awful being is not at the bottom of the confusion—that His will is not my suffering and death?

I have directed you to what I believe, what the Bible declares, is the one ground of the hope of man. This is the one sure rock on which man can plant himself. If his difficulties, sorrows, struggles, be not such that God and the development of God's counsel can help him out of them, there is no hope for him. But if his life and his hope be linked however feebly with God, then He must bear his servant on with Him in the path of his triumphal progress, and bring his battle and suffering to a victorious issue at last. But again, what do we know of God that we should trust Him? what aspects does He present to us? do they encourage or discourage the hoping against hope in Him? We have two sources of knowledge—what He has said to, what He has done for, man.

1. His word.

There is something unspeakably sublime in the appeal in Isaiah xl, 26 :—“ *Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things, that bringeth out their host by number : he calleth them all by names by the greatness of his might, for that he is strong in power ; not one faileth.*” It is Heaven's protest against man's despair. Nor is Isaiah the only sacred writer who utters it. There is something very strikingly parallel in Job. *Here* we have a desperate age and people, *there* we have a desperate man. And in both cases God's appeal is to the grand and stedfast order of the vast universe, which He sustains and assures. Read Job xxxviii.

It is difficult to discern at first sight the reason of this appeal. Where is the link of connection between stars and men; what comfort should the contemplation of the power and fixedness

of His purpose in creation, bring to one careworn, burdened, miserable, hopeless human heart? I believe that the link is here. God does not explain himself to the stars, He does to you. Why? why should He come forth to explain and justify Himself? why not continue to pursue His own course with you as with the creation, and leave it to explain and justify itself in time? Why? but because you are of more value than many stars. I believe that this was the substance of God's answer to Job. It was not the picture of God's glorious ways in the creation—though it helps us when brooding over our particular grief to look wide afield, and contemplate the excellent wisdom and loving-kindness of the Lord; but it was the fact that God so loved His servant as to come to him in person and paint the picture before his sight. Then Job's faithless cry was answered. "I cannot find Him," the sufferer cried, "before, behind, on the right hand, on the left, I search for Him, I feel for Him, but He is not there." And God came and stood before his face, and said; "I am here, it is more to me to explain and justify myself to thy agonized heart, my up-right servant, than to listen to the choral hymns of the constellations, and to lead out on the wolds of space the troops of stars. And then Job had rest. God tells us, if words can tell, that all the hosts of heaven are attendant on the fortunes of mankind. They were made, they are sustained for man, and the unfolding of man's life. They all live that God's deep purpose concerning man may be accomplished. If Israel perish, if God's purpose, His sovereign purpose of redemption, which rules all other purposes, be frustrated, then this great universe has been created and sustained for æons in vain. It seems that man's life-battle and life-work are but slight things and obscure, amidst the procession of the powers which carry on the vital activities of the great universe, which stretches out around him into the infinite on every hand; but God's word

affirms, with an emphasis, an intensity of reiteration and force which might carry conviction to the most sorrowful and despondent heart, that grand as are the interests involved in the order and procession of starry worlds, they shrink to nothing before the interest of the struggle of truth against lies, goodness against evil, in one individual human heart. God's works praise Him in all places of His dominion, but man can glorify Him. On the issues of man's life—the end of this deadly moral struggle, of which this world is the theatre—He has staked interest and hope of which creation has no measures; in truth He has staked the existence of His eternal kingdom on the results of this grand moral experiment, on the making a cosmos—a glorious spiritual immortal creation—out of the confusion and discord into which the devil has plunged the world. He has given us the right to say, so closely has He bound our moral interests with His own, that if He forgets His promises, if He forsakes His world, He forgets, He forsakes Himself. (Read Isaiah liv, 5—10; xlix, 13—18.)

God declares here that we are not only involved inextricably in the fulfilment of His deepest and most cherished counsels, but that we are needed to satisfy the yearnings of His Father's heart.

It is hard for the spirit to realise all that is meant by the fatherly love of God. To dare to appeal to a Being of such awful power, of such infinite elevation, as to a human parent; to confide to His ear as to a Father's, every aching want, every moan of pain, seems perilous presumption; and so we hedge round with respectful limitations and qualifications the great fact, the central fact, of human life, the Fatherhood of God. But God reiterates the word, and gathers around it all the associations which can strike the chord of filial love in our hearts. He will not have us limit it or qualify it. It is so essential that to limit or qualify it, is to limit or qualify *Him*. He declares His

love as a Father ; His yearning as a Father over the prodigal and rebellious also ; He tells us that He loves them the more tenderly for their sufferings, but the more longingly for their wanderings. "*Is Ephraim my dear son ? is he a pleasant child ? for since I spake against him, I do earnestly remember him still : therefore my bowels are troubled for him ; I will surely have mercy upon him, saith the Lord.*" (Jeremiah xxxi, 20.) "It is hard to credit such love in such a Being ; but the word Father, God's own word, carries it all ; why should we dare to question it when that cry of a father's heart comes to us down the glades of time. "*O my son Absalom, my son, my son, Absalom ! would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son !*" (2 Samuel xviii, 33.) Is there nothing in our human experience which can help us to comprehend that Father's joy, and that exulting strain : "*Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him ; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet : And bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it ; and let us eat, and be merry : For this my son was dead, and is alive again ; he was lost, and is found.*" (Luke xv, 22—24.) So it is for His own sake, and for the sake of something deeper in Him than His purposes, He seeks us, He seeks to bind us in our sins and sorrows, our sufferings and struggles, by the cords of love and by the bands of a man to Himself.

For the love of His heart, He seeks us and cannot lose us—no tear falls, no sigh is breathed, no blow is struck through all this long agony of strife, which we name earth's history, unmarked on high. But is it in word only ? May I know by any surer token the love of God ? Has God *done* anything as a Father which should banish this faithless desponding cry for ever from our hearts ? Brethren, the "agony and bloody sweat, the cross and passion, the precious death and burial," speak to us when stars are dumb, and tell each suffering, struggling, human spirit, with a

tone of truth and tenderness which is the joy of heaven, and the despair of hell, to believe, to hope, to rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory, in the living God. Isaiah's grand appeal to the immutability of the counsels of the eternal expands through Christ into Paul's exulting strains. *For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*" (Romans viii, 38—39.)

Thus much we know of God.

III. Let us apply these principles to the seasons of our experience when faith in the living God is the one thing which stands between us and the most blank despair.

1. The deep waters of personal affliction, when "*deep calleth unto deep at the noise of His waterspouts, and all His waves and billows are gone over us.*" No one with any depth of nature, capable of great suffering and therefore of great joy, passes through life without knowing moments when the deepest root-fibres of his faith in God are strained, and ready to loose their hold. I am not speaking of common troubles, which like a salt-bath brace the frame when the first shiver is over. "*Why should a living man complain,*" says Jeremiah to the faint hearts which moan the moment a cloud comes sailing over their sun. But there are calamities which touch, not life only, but what is more precious than life, what lends to life all its charm, without which it is a dark, starless waste, which wring the moan, "*Oh that I now might die,*" from the overprest heart. Job remains to us the type of all such sufferers, Job xix, 6—12, will illustrate it, or Psalm lxxviii, 6—8. It is idle to talk in the ear of such sufferers the common topics of consolation. It passes by them as the idle wind, or if reite-

rated, as by Job's three friends, it lashes to a frenzy which is prone to break out in wild and impious arraignments of the wisdom and love of God. The eye is blinded by the mist of tears, it cannot behold Him, the heart-strings are twisted and knotted with anguish, it is idle to say that He is near. The sufferer gets reckless, "no sinner can suffer worse than I suffer, where is the profit of my fidelity to God, where is the fruit of my faith? there is no fruit, it is all bitterness and wrong." "*My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me!*" broke from the lips of the most faithful sufferer, at a moment when no shadow of doubt rested on His righteousness, His single-hearted devotion to the work which the Father had given Him to do. Happy if in such moments there does not rise in the spirit a bitter question of the worth of the unseen things for which we have been striving, of the very existence of the spiritual realities for the sake of which we have plunged into the floods and fires. Argument at such moments is useless; we cannot argue with ourselves, we cannot tolerate the argument of others. "Have faith in God," is the one word that helps us. Cease striving to understand the reason of this calamity which is crushing you, relax the strain of endeavour, have faith in God and rest. Suffer, believing that, deep as may be the depth to which He has plunged you, the everlasting arms are beneath you still, and the counsels of His love. Hear the serene and solemn voices which stream down on you from beyond the stars. "*Consider Him who endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself,*" and hold on. "*Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him.*" It helps us not in such seasons to search for the reason of the special affliction; we must be brought, as Job was brought, to rest on the absolute unchanging love and fidelity of God.

2. In the weary search of the intellect for truth, the struggle to comprehend the incomprehensible, to know the inscrutable,

to see the invisible, which is part, and not the least heavy part, of the discipline of a man and of mankind. There are moments when the sphinx-riddle of existence seems utterly insoluble, when the meaning and end of life seems utterly inscrutable, when the secret of nature seems absolutely undiscoverable, and the devil is close by with his suggestions; "there is no truth behind the veil of the visible, there is no eternal basis of duty, there is no intelligent mind and hand within the phenomena of creation; be content with the visible and tangible, make your own scheme of life, your own theory of the universe, and rest." But man cannot rest in his own ideas. He knows that he was made to comprehend and work out God's; and the weary struggle begins again. What is truth, what is duty, what is life, what are the thoughts of God? The sense of the mystery, the painfulness of the effort to know, presses the most disciplined and powerful minds most heavily. Their circle of light is wider than ours, but also and inevitably their circle of darkness. If we can gain a little sphere of light around our daily habits and actions, and can walk fairly in the light with relation to our work-day lives, all round this sphere there is a belt of darkness where our intellects would lose themselves utterly. Each new element of truth we master shows to us new aspects of the unknown; each new conviction we establish about God brings us in front of new questions which till then had never come within our sphere, and offers fresh and graver perplexities to our struggling minds. And we faint under the sense of the infinite difficulty of knowing all that man longs to know, has a sense that he was made to know about life, nature, and God. "Have faith in God" is the best word of help which can reach us at such moments. He sees what you cannot see, He understands what you cannot grasp, He has a method though you cannot seize it, He *is* truth, though but here a line and there a line of the

perfect form of truth is unveiled. Nor is this the silent abandonment of the problem in despair. To rest in the thought "God understands what defies my comprehension, God has a reason and method which evades my sight," is to say that God intends me to understand it in time. For faith is the discernment of invisible things, and faith which is the fruit of the Spirit searcheth all things, even the deep things of God. Faith in God is the beginning of the soul's education in the diviner knowledge; the lifting of the soul into that higher region in which, when the work of discipline is ended, the soul shall see the inner mystery of God and of all things face to face, and know even as also it is known.

3. In dark crises of human history, when truth, virtue, and manhood, seem perishing from the world.

There is a tide in the moral as well as in the physical order of the world. The ebb and the flood of the great wave of moral progress follows in its moonled marches the pathway of some orb in the world of spirit which escapes our sight. There are ages when the heavenly currents seem to flood the channels of the world's activity, and ages when they seem to ebb again and leave the human coasts dry and bare. There are generations when the devil seems to break loose and rage and storm through the world at will; and ages when some strong restraint seems to bind or at any rate limit his powers. All great reformations have been born in an age of fearful corruptions, all great movements have been cradled in something like despair. In the ages of moral darkness and desolation the pious are tempted to give up the hope of progress, and to expect some dread catastrophe, to cry out for the advent of God the avenger, and to prophesy that the great and terrible day of the Lord is near. In the days of Amos, the days of the second Jeroboam, the cry "the day of the Lord is come" spread terror through the land. The age of the captivity, the

age of the destruction of Jerusalem, the age of the dissolution of the Roman empire, the tenth century, the fifteenth century, were confidently regarded by the earnest spirits of the time as the last days of earth's sinful history, the day of a sudden and terrible advent of the Lord. And the cry is rife now, in these mammon-worshipping days. Coming tribulation, coming judgments, coming redemption of the elect by the strong stern hand of the King, who shall rule the nations with a rod of iron, and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel, are the cries that fill the air. "HAVE FAITH IN GOD." The world has lived through all these ages, and come forth from them brighter, fresher, stronger, younger; for the baptism of suffering it had endured. "*Why sayest thou, O Jacob, and speakest, O Israel, My way is hid from the Lord, and my judgment is passed over from my God?*" God rules by methods long matured and mightily though silently developed. Not by catastrophes but by vital impulses, by currents of vital force which He sends surging through the innermost channels of the human world, He is working silently, but swiftly and resistlessly, the regeneration of mankind. The struggle may be deadly, awful; it must be. We may even now be entering a cloud, and may fear as we enter the cloud, but our age, the great world of men, shall come forth purged of some selfishness and worldliness by the process, and the fair aspects of that kingdom which "*is righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost,*" shall smile up more broadly, more brightly in the face of heaven. "*For as the earth bringeth forth her bud, and as the garden causeth the things that are sown in it to spring forth; so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations.*"

I know but one limit to the reliance of man on the sustaining strength and help of God, and that is, that what is helped, what we commit to His hand be born of Him; if it has His life in it,

however feeble its pulse, it cannot die. But that condition is absolute. This very fixedness of God is set with deadly certainty against every vice, every passion, every scheme of the carnal heart, every self-willed lust of flesh and mind, every Babel which man would build up in despite of God. "*Lift up your eyes now and behold, who hath created these things.*" Can you struggle against that awful power, are you ready for that dread conflict with the Eternal? "*Be wise now,*" submit, "*kiss the Son,*" make His will yours and build on His foundation, and then, however tremendous the conflict, however sharp the pain of life, there will be voices all round you to preach to you hope and to prophesy triumph. Down from on high, from beyond the stars, from those who have fought and conquered, and are walking in white before the Lamb,

Mortal! they softly say,
Peace to thy heart,
We too, yes mortal,
Have been as thou art.
Hope lifted, doubt depressed,
Seeing in part,
Tried, troubled, tempted,
Sustained as thou art.

Or in words of infinitely grander and sublimer strain—
WHEREFORE SEEING WE ALSO ARE COMPASSED ABOUT WITH
SO GREAT A CLOUD OF WITNESSES, LET US LAY ASIDE EVERY
WEIGHT, AND THE SIN WHICH DOTHSO EASILY BESET US, AND
LET US RUN WITH PATIENCE THE RACE THAT IS SET BEFORE
US, LOOKING UNTO JESUS THE AUTHOR AND FINISHER OF
OUR FAITH; WHO FOR THE JOY THAT WAS SET BEFORE HIM
ENDURED THE CROSS, DESPISING THE SHAME, AND IS SET DOWN
AT THE RIGHT HAND OF THE THRONE OF GOD. (Heb. xii, 1, 2.)

AIDS TO THE DEVELOPMENT
OF THE
DIVINE LIFE.

BY THE
REV. J. BALDWIN BROWN, B.A.

No. X.
WORTHY TO OBTAIN THAT WORLD.

"Worthy to obtain that world."—LUKE xx, 35.

THE demonstration, not of the resurrection only, but of immortality, which this passage sets forth, is one of the few formal arguments of our Lord. Rarely do His discourses tend to establish or overthrow dogmas; they rather aim at the correction and the purification of the evil heart out of which ultimately all false doctrines spring. For it is most profoundly true that all false doctrine has false desire as its counterpart, or rather as the basis on which it stands, the ground out of which all its nourishment flows. "*Their foolish heart was darkened:*" what a world of suggestion is here. The aberration of the spirit darkens the intellect. Wish is father to the thought in all the great developed heresies of the world. If man knows not God it is because he desires not the knowledge of Him or of His ways. Let the heart be set right, and the daylight, the daylight of God, streams over all the objects which the intellect can discern or pursue. "*Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.*" "*He that will do his will shall know the doctrine.*" I have no belief that a man.

who desires rightly can go far astray. A man may *think* that his desires are right when they are vain and selfish—that is another matter; such a one may fall into grievous error, and learn by what he suffers to correct the desires of his heart. But he whose desires are pure, whose spirit is heavenly, is in the way to know the truth as they know it on high.

Hence in all our Lord's discourses there is a distinct aiming at that moral wrongness out of which all perversions and misapprehensions spring. Very rarely does He undertake to sustain by argument a fact or a doctrine without, at any rate, seeking to relate it directly to the spiritual life of those whom He addressed. To get the will of God done was the great aim of His life and of His death agony in our world. But here the denial of the doctrine was so outrageous, so in the teeth of the simplest and plainest declarations of the word which they professed to believe, and by which they professed to be bound, that our Lord seems to have felt that the mere confounding them and putting them to silence was an object well worth seeking, that their confusion would be a righteous penalty on their self-willed ignorance of the plainest testimonies of the Word of God.

The argument here is a very profound one. It is inconclusive unless we look deeper than the logical meaning of the words. Logically, I have always felt that there was great difficulty in apprehending the real force of our Lord's demonstration. That it was a demonstration, a conclusive demonstration, is palpable. It carried conviction to every heart. So complete was the discomfiture of the Sadducees, that they had not a word to answer, neither "after that durst they ask Him any question."

Let us read the narrative:—"Then came to him certain of the Sadducees, which deny that there is any resurrection; and they asked him, saying, Master, Moses wrote unto us,

If any man's brother die, having a wife, and he die without children, that his brother should take his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother. There were therefore seven brethren : and the first took a wife, and died without children. And the second took her to wife, and he died childless. And the third took her ; and in like manner the seven also : and they left no children, and died. Last of all the woman died also. Therefore in the resurrection whose wife of them is she ? for seven had her to wife. And Jesus answering said unto them, The children of this world marry, and are given in marriage : but they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage : neither can they die any more : for they are equal unto the angels ; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection. Now that the dead are raised, even Moses shewed at the bush, when he calleth the Lord the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. For he is not a God of the dead, but of the living : for all live unto him. Then certain of the scribes answering said, Master, thou hast well said. And after that they durst not ask him any question at all." (Luke xx, 27—40.) Now, strictly speaking, if we look only at the verbal force of the terms employed, "I am the God" may mean "I am the being who was the God" of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and that would carry no demonstration of the resurrection, nor of immortality. The real question is, what did God mean when He called Himself the God of Abraham ? How much were those words felt to imply ? The whole argument appears to me to turn on this. God is the *Creator* of the heavens and the earth, the *Creator* of everything that hath life. He is the God of man, and of man alone. There is something in the word "*I am the Lord thy God*" which could not be spoken of a mere creature. There is a relation recognised here, a covenant established, which could only exist between God and a being immortal as

Himself—a being made in His image, and into whose nostrils He had imbreathed the breath of life. Miss that thought, that the being who can speak of the Lord as “the Lord his God” must be immortal, and you miss the whole force of the argument. To the same effect precisely is the argument of St. Paul in the Epistle to the Hebrews:—“*These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city.*” (Heb. xi, 13—16.) So sacred a name involves a permanent, eternal relationship. God is not the God of the dead, but of the living; not of the mortal, but of the immortal, for all whose God He is, whom He knows by name, who have found favour in His sight, live to Him, live with Him; His life is in them, they cannot die. They know Him, “whom to know is life everlasting.” If God calls himself the covenant God of any man, of mankind, it means that man is immortal as Himself. Thus much on the general bearings of the passage. Let us now concentrate our thoughts on the text, “WORTHY TO OBTAIN THAT WORLD.”

I. THAT WORLD.

The world He spake of was the world from which He came, and to which He was about to pass. His home—the home of His Spirit, where all things are square to celestial measures; the world of the resurrection, where God is all and in all.

Picture to yourselves the consciousness of a seed stirring feebly in the early spring-time in the bosom of the dark, damp

earth: pushing up its shoots blindly and painfully to where it feels that some warmth and light—what it may be, this warmth and light, unknown as yet—are wooing it. Then picture it emerged into the brilliant sunlight, resplendent in colour, fragrance, and form, kissed by the warm sunbeams, fed by the sweet dews, smiled on by the stars from their infinite depths, consciously part of the vivid, glowing, blooming, blessed life of the great living universe of God. Brethren, “*your life is hid with Christ in God, and when Christ, who is your life, shall appear, you also shall appear with him in glory.*” The life is hidden now, as the seed in the winter-time; living, stirring, with a world within it, and a world in tune with its present need all round it. But it is a world of death, that is, that death which is the first stage of life. The world to come, the world to which the Saviour visibly passed, that world where Abraham and Israel *are* with God, is the world of life, the world of the resurrection. To the spirit's eye the Lord who spake these words was the most glorious being in this universe. Essentially, none so glorious as He. And yet in form and aspect, in all that could be seen of Him, there was none on earth so sad, so worn, so desolate. The spirits saw the glory even of His humiliation. Moses and Elias, when they came in their radiant forms, could find no theme of converse but “*the decease which He should accomplish at Jerusalem.*” But the prophet painted the human vision of Him in the pathetic prophetic words, “*Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.*” His glory was there, but earth could

not manifest it. As far as earth was concerned, it was hidden, as the whole glory of the flower is hidden in the seed which is cast into the dark ground. That world, the world of the resurrection, showed Him openly to be glorious, it was the world in which His glory was native and at home.

But it is neither the glory, the immortality, nor the blessedness which strikes me most forcibly when I meditate on the world of the resurrection. I rather dwell on the thought that—

1. It is the world which shall image purely the idea of God.

It is a world—not a mere state, whatever that may mean—it is a world of relationship, society, life. A city, a country, a world, are the descriptive images. That on which the apostle dwells with peculiar fondness is the “city.” He was a man of cities. A man made to mix with the human throngs and live in the crowded forum of life. All that is highest in man’s life is developed in society. Where society is closest, where the life of society is most vivid and fruitful, such a man as Saint Paul would most willingly dwell. He carried the thought upwards. “*The city that hath foundations, whose builder and maker is the Lord,*” the life of which shall fulfil the Divine idea. Here God’s idea, life as He would have it, as man pines for it, is buried, fearfully marred by sin; a rent, dishonoured, storm-beaten, corrupt, and corrupting fragment of a Divine idea. Once it was fair and pure and brilliant as heaven, though with that dazzling morning brilliance which quickly fades. Its very atmosphere bathed the being that lived in it in bliss. The world was the glory of God the Creator, the dress of His perfect thought about the home and theatre of life. Now its very atmosphere is laden with curses, be the cause what it may; we at any rate have not to go far to seek it. There are myriads, millions, of God’s children on earth at this moment cursing their day, moaning and wailing over life, persuading

themselves with the Hindoo that creation is either a disease or an abortion of the Supreme, longing only to lay down life and its burdens, if even in the lap of eternal, oblivious death. In the resurrection the world shall rise, purged of all that disfigures, distorts, and defiles, out of the wreck of the present. That world will be the extrication of the Divine idea out of all that drags it down here to the dust and the darkness of death. It will be the resurrection—the standing up—of God's idea of a spirit's home, from which all that emanates not from Him shall be expelled for ever. The very memory of earth's dark night shall be eclipsed by the burning splendour of the new creation. Eden will rise transfigured in the world which we name heaven. Blessed thought to the pilgrims who have trod the bare desert bravely and known all its hardships, and who have stifled the moan which was oftentimes ready to burst forth as they gazed round them on this unhomelike, unheavenly world!

2. It is the world where man's life shall be delivered from its travail, and shall be born into a sphere which shall give free room to all his possibilities, hopes, and powers. "*The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope. Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which*

have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. For we are saved by hope : but hope that is seen is not hope : for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for ? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it." (Romans viii, 16—25.) The whole philosophy of it is there.

We want what the world wants—redemption. And its redemption, like its fall, waits on ours. What heart of man has not a hope larger than any possibility of fulfilment here? What human spirit does not sometimes groan over the narrow limits of its inward world? What son of God, loftier in name and birthright than an angel, has not often to groan, "*I am as a beast before thee*"? We plod daily through the weary tasks, patient, contented that it should be so for a time, but knowing, or we ought to know, that within us there is capacity for tasks which might strain the strength of an angel. We are bound by ties too tight to be unloosed to beings, things, tasks, which, however bravely we may take the discipline, do ever mock our yearning desires, passionate longings, inalienable hopes. Who has not his eye on some black line which twines in with and often hides the golden thread of his destiny; some cross which presses most crushingly where it is hardest to bear, and which will press on till death? And whose heart does not bound to hear of a world of resurrection, where the incubus will be cast off, where the captive shall be free, where the spirit's will shall have lordly exercise, the soul's election absolute validity, the noblest powers their widest scope, the most soaring aspirations their fullest satisfactions, the most latent possibilities of the being their developed and fruitful life. The world where all this is is that world—the world of the resurrection.

3. The world wherein all being, all possession, shall but

expand and intensify through eternity. Death shall be dead, buried in the wreck of the world which he deflowered; vicissitude shall be banished by the reign of that Divine Word which liveth and abideth for ever. Exhaustion will be unknown to spirits baptized to immortal youth in the risen life of the Saviour, while limit will vanish everywhere in the infinite fulness of God. "WORTHY TO OBTAIN THAT WORLD."

II. Who are the worthy, and wherein does their worthiness consist?

The form of the sentence is noteworthy. "*Worthy to obtain.*" This is not exactly high doctrine—it is not "the marked for that world," irrespective of quality and fitness, but those who have a fitness which may be spoken of even by Him who knew what was in man as a "worthiness." Further, the word "obtain" is suggestive. It does not hint at sitting still and waiting till some celestial gale shall waft them to its gates. The image is rather one of a combatant, a runner, trained with consummate diligence, and contending with desperate energy to obtain the prize. This is the class of thoughts with which the "obtaining" is associated. "*Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain. And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an, incorruptible. I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air: but I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.*" (1 Cor. ix, 24—27.) "*Wherefore gird up the loins of your minds, be sober, and hope to the end, for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.*"

The answer to the question, "Who are the worthy?" is a very simple one, and very near at hand.

1. They are those who can enter into God's counsel about *this* world, and do enter into it, who become "worthy to obtain *that* world."

All that God asks is that we shall look at this life as He looks at it—accept the pilgrim condition, put ourselves under the guidance of the angel, and lift our hearts to that world as our home. The worthy in His estimation are those who live in, and are "saved by, hope." God looks on this world as a world in which the things which He loves are in travail, in which, with great effort and sorrow, they are but beginning to be. He asks you to think with Him—to make this your seed-time, and reap your harvest with Him on high.

Man may easily frame a totally different scheme of life. He may set himself to get out of the present just as much satisfaction as it can yield to him, balancing carefully the pain by the pleasure, and concluding that, on the whole, it is a very good and pleasant sort of world, sinking deliberately all hope in enjoyment, and losing all faith in sight. This is what we mean by "the way of the world." It is the cry of the millions—"Make the 'now' as rich in enjoyment as possible, and let the future take care of the things of itself. Now is the eternity of lust." There need be no reckless, wanton, passionate indulgences. The wisest men of the world know perfectly that excess is the worst form of pain. Epicurus was as moderate and temperate in his theory of life as the Stoics. But the essence of it all is, the present against the future—the claim of the insatiate "now."

That there are those on earth who say, "If I had in absolute possession all that man has ever dreamed of having, still this would be a dark, sad world to me. Still I could not understand this contrast, which is universal, between hope and reality, aspiration, vision, and life. My dream reaches higher than 'having.' I might *have* all things, and *be* a wreck.

'What shall it profit a man, if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul, or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?' I see everywhere, and no glossing over the surface can obliterate the traces, the fell work of sin. Thence this schism between the idea and the reality—the image of life in God's Word, which in idea is in me also, and the reality I see around me and within me in man. I see how all here is marred by transgression, how its dark stain is inwrought into the very texture of life. My Lord found no Eden here, and made none. He was content to suffer, and He calls me to suffer; He was content to wait, and He calls me to wait; the world to live in, to rest in, the world of the resurrection—the world of life—is beyond. I believe Him. Blessed be God, I can accept the law of my present. I elect to be a sufferer here, a conqueror there. Others may seek here their conquests, I resign them. All that the world could offer would not satisfy my spirit, and I accept joyfully the gospel which tells me that if I take this as the scene of my discipline, and hide my life with Christ in God, there is a glorious development in store. *'Who are these that are clothed in white robes, and whence came they?'* said one who prevailed to look upon the shining company in the celestial world. *'These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, and therefore they are before the throne of God.'* I elect to join that company. I elect to let the present pass; nay, rather to welcome its sharpest pains. Help me, O my God." The men who can say that with a humble trust in Him who is able to keep them from falling are the worthy to obtain that world. "*Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee,*" lies at the root of the whole of it; and to such the rack, the flame, are but as the prophet's fiery chariot, to bear them more swiftly to the world of the resurrection, the bosom of their Lord.

This leads me to observe—

2. There is something beyond this, underneath it, which makes this suffering, this patience of hope, possible for man. It is a relation to a person essentially, not to an idea or a set of ideas. To know Christ is to know essentially God's counsel. "He is made of God unto us wisdom." To love Christ is to choose essentially the good, the true, the eternal, and to let the visible and the perishing slip. Those shining ones were there so radiant, "*for they had washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.*" They believed; they rested on the atoning sacrifice for pardon; they believed in His mediation as the one channel of intercourse between man and the Father; they believed in His resurrection and ascension as that of man's forerunner to the risen world; with Him they recognised in sin the broadest fact in man's present existence—fatal, damning, unless purged away. They saw by faith His deadly struggle, His glorious victory, and strong in faith they grasped the fruits. To them life was not a scene of suffering only, but of earnest and resolute struggle, fighting under the great Captain to get Satan down underneath their feet. It is this which makes the patience of hope a grand reality, a reality whose root is Christ—Hatred of sin, His conquest of it here, His glorious, eternal triumph over it on high. They lived by loving faith in the Son of God, and this was the victory that overcame the world, even that faith. And your life, if you are worthy to live among them, is a risen life already; the home of your redeemed spirit is now where He is, in the world of the resurrection. '*If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with*

him in glory. Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth ; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry : for which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience : in the which ye also walked some time, when ye lived in them. But now ye also put off all these ; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth. Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds : and have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him : where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free ; but Christ is all, and in all." (Coloss. iii, 1—11.) Live in the strength of your own soul's aspiration, your own spirit's longing, for something more fair and bright than this, and the patience of hope will dwindle into a puling sentiment, and the ghost of it will haunt your unsatisfied eternity. Live by faith, and the life of God passes into you, the hope which inspires you is His hope, the strength which sustains you is His omnipotence, the life which quickens you is His eternal life.

And thus boasting is excluded. There is a worthiness for that world. God is not glorified in contradicting in His ways every principle which He has taught us to cherish, and pouring scorn on the judgments which He has taught us to form about the right and the wise in both human and divine things. To gather together all the vainest, idlest, emptiest, most useless souls in creation, and glorify them by the act of His sovereign will, is the notion of His ways which some delight in, but to me it would simply glorify a sovereignty from the sway of whose sceptre one would desire passionately to be free. There is a worthiness for that world, there is an unworthiness—"unworthy of everlasting life!" The worthiness is to be won

and worn as a wreath of dignity, a crown of glory. And the noblest, strongest, wisest, shall stand next the throne, "*for one star differeth from another in glory.*" But the worthiness has its root in Christ, not in us—"CHRIST IN US," the hope and the earnest of glory. It is the partaking of the worthiness of Christ, for out of Him we are nothing, in Him we are glorious. The crowns we wear are the crowns he won for us by His victory; and as we pass at last, having been found worthy to obtain that world and the resurrection, in shining ranks before His throne, we shall cast those crowns before His feet, and join in the jubilant anthem of the redeemed.

"And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth. And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever."

The consecrated cross I'll bear
Till death shall set me free,
And then go home my crown to wear,
For there's a crown for me.

Upon the crystal pavement down,
 At Jesu's pierced feet,
 Joyful I'll cast my golden crown,
 And His dear Name repeat.

And palms shall wave and harps shall ring
 Within heaven's arches high ;
 "The Lord that lives," the ransomed sing,
 "That lives, no more to die."

O precious cross ! O glorious crown !
 O resurrection day !
 Blest Saviour, send some angel down
 To bear my soul away.

AIDS TO THE DEVELOPMENT
OF THE
DIVINE LIFE.

BY THE
REV. J. BALDWIN BROWN, B.A.

No. XI.

STUDY TO SHOW THYSELF APPROVED
UNTO GOD.

"Study to show thyself approved unto God."—2 TIM., ii, 15.

THE Epistles to Timothy are about the most inspiring words that have ever been spoken or written by man. There breathes through them that most convincing of spirits, an intense conviction. There, at any rate, is earnestness in its essence—a soul of matchless energy and capacity, bent on an object which tasks worthily every faculty to the utmost, and filled with a love which stirs and strains to fullest tension every latent fibre of the heart. Earnestness is a grand thing when you can get an object which is worth being earnest about. Indeed, conviction is an essential element in it; mock earnestness rings false on every ear. Conviction rises to the highest dignity and certainty when it has God to rest on, when it concerns itself with the great realities of being which He has

revealed. Then the whole soul is possessed and inspired ; then men can conquer or subvert a world. Paul was an old man, a veteran of the cross, when he wrote these Epistles. More than thirty years had he spent in proclaiming the Gospel in the chief countries of the Roman Empire. A life it had been of matchless toils and perils, a life such as only a man of heroic blood could have endured. "*Are they ministers of Christ ? (I speak as a fool) I am more ; in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep ; In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren ; In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches.*" (2 Cor. xi, 23—28.) But his joy in Christ, his glory in the Gospel, grew with his suffering. Nowhere does he speak with such passionate ardour of his Saviour, nowhere does he exhort the young soldiers with such inspiring tones, as when he was about to close a martyr's life for Christ by a martyr's death. Ah, my friends ! my young friends ! give me the hope, the joy, that years and sorrows will not rob me of, that will stand the strain of this life's wear and tear of the spirit, will waken gladder and yet gladder thanksgivings that ever I was led to seek it as the body yields to the assaults of mortal sickness, and will burst out into a shout of unspeakable joy and triumph when it passes under the cold shade of death. Paul, the aged, exulted in the service which had worn out the energies of perhaps the noblest spirit that ever yoked itself to duty. Standing on the narrow verge

between two worlds, his spirit could take clearer views than you or I can of what it is good to live by and to die by, and here is the result. "*But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content. But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil : which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. But thou, O man of God, flee these things ; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses. I give thee charge in the sight of God, who quickeneth all things, and before Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession ; That thou keep this commandment without spot, unrebukeable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ : Which in his times he shall shew, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords : Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto ; whom no man hath seen, nor can see : to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen.*"

(1 Tim., vi, 6—16.) What man of the world, what man of "millions," has ever made such good confession of joy in the Past and hope of the Future, as Paul made from his prison-house, with the rack and the block in sight? Yes, brethren ; this is the gift of Christ to His followers, a growing conviction that they have well done in serving Him, a growing hope of a glorious immortal recompence when the hope of other men is withering like the grass in the furnace, a vision of a crown of glory, when around worldlings the dense darkness is gathering, through which come mutterings of the storm of fiery indigna-

tion, which shall devour the adversaries of Christ at last. It is a glorious thing to hear an old man who has lived nobly, and has won the prize of it, inspire his young disciples to the same career. No talk reaches so far as that of the man who has won experience by suffering, and has tried through a long life the truths he proclaims. It rings like a trumpet-call over the field of life's battle, it stirs the blood to heroic effort and achievement, it prophesies certain victory. The truth to which such a man as Paul after a life like his bore earnest witness, must conquer upon earth, must reign in heaven. Compare his end with the end of the most notable worldlings, and make your election. See that proud old man, once the strongest man in England, holding more fully perhaps than any other man of his day in his hands the destinies of Europe, cast off in his old age by the king whose interests he had served with singular devotion, unpitied by the country at whose glory he had aimed, bursting forth in his hour of mortal sickness into the passionate lamentation, "O, had I but served my God as I have served my king, He would not have forsaken me in my gray hairs;" and then turn to the death-struggle of this veteran champion of the cross. "*For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.*" (2 Tim., iv, 6—8.) And again, I say, make your election. Choose which life you will have, and understand you are choosing which death—which eternity.

I. Paul assumes that a man must serve some one master; seek to be approved by some one in whom he believes and hopes.

No man can serve *two* masters, though it is the constant

struggle of the life of a multitude of men to do it. But man must serve *one*. Complete independence is not within his reach, and would be a curse to him if it were. Man, by his nature and constitution, is a servant in a house, a soldier in an army. He needs leaders, he needs a cause to inspire him, he needs a good word from one whom he honours to cheer him, he needs a prize from a master at last. The one question open to him is—shall it be God's household in which he serves, or Satan's? Shall his captain be the devil, or the Lord? The man who most boasts of independence is the man who, if you watch him closely, you will find most abjectly dependent upon others. The man who never does what he is asked is easily managed by always asking the reverse of what you wish. I have seen them get pigs on shipboard at Liverpool by always pulling them backwards; I have often been amused at the illustration which it offers of the independence of large classes of mankind. You are living for the world's praise or God's. Paul is putting the case of a preacher: preaching is a great power, the easiest way, too, to influence and fame. In art, in literature, in science, in statesmanship, men must serve a life-time of labour before they attain to eminence and influence. In preaching, boys, if they have but wit and words enough, may leap at once to such fame and power as words can give. Hence, in every age, the multitude of talkers for the sake of notoriety and power—the men who prophesy pleasant things, make their hearers think that they are all right, while the rest of the world is all wrong. Crowds of such rose up in the apostolic age, lovers of themselves rather than lovers of God. Against such seekers of the praise of this world by the dilution of God's truth, Paul cries out—“*Remember that Jesus Christ of the seed of David was raised from the dead according to my gospel: Wherein I suffer trouble, as an evil doer, even unto bonds; but the word of God is not bound. Therefore I endure all things*

for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory. It is a faithful saying: For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him: If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us: If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself. Of these things put them in remembrance, charging them before the Lord that they strive not about words to no profit, but to the subverting of the hearers. Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." (2 Tim., ii, 8—15.) And the same truth runs through all things. In art, in literature, in trade, there are two great companies,—the one seeking truth, the other seeking success. The one not daring to say a word, draw a line, sell a bale, otherwise than by the strictest measure of truth and righteousness; the other daring to do anything tricky, mean, smart, and popular, if it only wins even the reputation of success. Why there are men of high eminence in commerce who dread the whisper of the commercial world,—“such and such a house is falling off in its returns;” there are men in the artistic world who dread the sentence, “such and such a picture, statue, book, won't take,” as few Christians dread the displeasure of God. The man who goes the least out of his own brute nature, dreads the ban and covets the praise of his class or set with unspeakable anxiousness. We all move in troops, and strive for the first rank by instinct, and to none of us is there a sensation so sweet as to hear “well done” from the leaders in the field in which we strive. It is a glorious element in man's nature, if he would not degrade himself to strive for the well-done of a world that is far beneath him. It makes him feel that he lives not to himself, but as a member of a community, a child of a family, a soldier of an army, in which he must look out of himself—God grant that you may look above yourself—for the

object of his life. It parades all the faculties in their finest attitudes, and strains all the muscles to their firmest tension. It is this instinct of man's nature which makes that busy hum of intense activity in all the highways of life, whence come works of such beauty and power that earth grows richer daily, and enriches heaven. The saddest sight on earth is the man who has not found his master, standing idle in the market-places because he finds no leader to enlist him in the troops of labour. When a man enters business, or begins to toil in some intellectual creation, he ceases to be his own master. Things have claims on him which he dares not negative. The world prescribes a course which he dares not widely forsake; and then for a time he works cheerily, for a time he is happy. The mere getting to work, getting under orders, has a joy in it; happiness is the atmosphere of healthy activity; a lazy body cannot be healthy, a lazy soul cannot be happy. Work—and all work is under orders—for a time gives happiness to man, but watch on and see whether it endures. See if it is the mere sensation of the surface of his being, or the experience of its innermost core; whether it be the tingling of the skin with the pleasure of a new impression, or the bounding of the heart under the inspiration of a glorious work. If the world be his master—the first; and soon you will see it fail him. The noblest faculty in him will be rusting, the deepest spring still unsealed. You will see his soul sickening, his heart hardening, his character demoralising, the stature of the moral man dwindling, himself becoming that saddest and most hopeless of all things in this universe, a spirit which the world has worn out, broken down, and flung aside to perish. If he serves God it will be the last. Watch—his happiness is hourly deepening, his glory in his Captain and his vocation is glowing more intensely daily, and it glows on for ever.

“Study to show thyself approved unto God.”

II. The conditions to be observed by a workman.

1. Understand fully that your chief vocation upon this earth is to be the servant of the Lord.

There are a thousand things which seem to claim a man; wife, children, business, daily bread, society, the future; but there is one calling which underlies all of them, and unites them all into the only unity which man can fully realise—the service of God. Life is manifold when we look at it with the eye of the understanding, from the standing ground of the world. “A changing woof,” verily it is, as Goethe sings, to him who looks at it from the outside; but how simple, clear, harmonious, beautiful, when a man can say, “Well, I have just one thing on earth to do—to serve the Lord.” He will do a thousand things daily, but they will not distract and oppress him; they will all be brought into a harmony, and compose but one thing, which, too, the stars and suns and seraphim are accomplishing—the service of the Lord. I do not wonder that a man who sees not this principle of unity in his life, gets sick at heart utterly when he considers the ceaseless duties, the conflicting claims, the difficult decisions, the dangerous actions, to which each day’s sunlight calls him. It is this pressure of life, moral, social, commercial life, upon the naked intellect and will of man, with no hope of throwing off the responsibility, no mode of getting release from the burden or help to bear it; which makes the Hindoo thinker long for sheer annihilation, the utter loss of individual consciousness and responsibility in God, as the “summum bonum” of the universe. There is but one thing, young friend, which can make life easy and joyful, and that is what makes it simple, single—the sense “I am a servant of God.” Whether I handle the brush, the pen, the chisel, or meat, or flour, or linens, I am God’s servant to do faithfully what I undertake to do; my chief concern is that He

may praise me ; that I may hear from heaven His well done murmuring each night above my pillow, and hushing me to slumber ; and in His hand my wise, faithful, almighty friend and master, I can safely leave the results.

2. Make truth and right your one success.

I think the devils must laugh sometimes when they hear men counting up their successes. One man prides himself among his set upon the number of his fellow creatures whom he has betrayed to ruin ; another upon the number of profitable tricks he has played in the day's business ; another upon the clever snares he has made to trap the unwary ; another, and this is held most legitimate and laudable, the number of pounds he has added to his account at his bankers, or the sums he has laid up, perhaps in Royal British Banks, against a rainy day. The first classes are succeeding simply in ensuring and hastening ruin. "Shame shall be the promotion of fools," and damnation the success of gamesters, whoremongers, and knaves. But even in the last case, in which wise and good men felicitate themselves and each other, how many of our brilliant successes "heap up to us temptation and a snare ;" how many will be regretted bitterly on a dying pillow ; how many will be cursed through a lost eternity ! Where are the wise ones, who reckon their successes thus—"This day I have withstood that wrong and upheld that right with all the force of my spirit ; I have fought against, and for the day, at any rate, have conquered that vanity, that meanness, that hypocrisy, that selfishness, that lust, in my own nature ; I have borne that witness for truth ; I have helped that case of struggling merit ; I have put bread into that hungry mouth ; I have let that chance of dishonest gain go by with scorn. This is my servant's duty, and thank God I have so far done it. These are my day's successes by God's goodness, of which I shall not be ashamed

on earth nor in heaven." Who keeps such books in a clear conscience, and knows a thrilling bounding joy in keeping to truth, resisting error and evil, putting down selfishness, vanity, and lust, in himself and in the world, such as none of your successful merchants know in their Tyburnian mansions—"Such as the wicked know not, when corn and wine and oil increase." That is a grand success. God has sent no man into the world to get on. He has sent every man to work in truth and uprightness, and leave the getting on to Him. If simple, clear, decisive, uncompromising truth will not get you on before men, bethink you of the angels, what they think of your clever tricksters, in their proud successes; what they think of the poor laggards in this world's race because of their uprightness, and how through all their shining ranks there echoes over all such failures a brave "well done." "Very fine, very romantic," say some of you, "a great deal too high for such a world as this." Christ's life is the arch-romance if this is romancing. God does not understand this world, if this be not the truth about godliness, which thus, and thus only, "*hath the promise of this life that now is, and of that which is to come.*" Square your transactions by measures that are standard in the world of spirit, and count successes by the rule of the angels if you would "*Study to shew yourself approved unto God.*"

3. Study.

It is most essential to all noble fruitful life—life that can "*shew itself approved unto God*"—that it should be fruit of study; that is, on clear principles, with a matured plan, and by patient, persevering, intelligent toil. "*Study*"—give thy mind to it, give thy hand to it, intelligently day by day. More lives go to wreck for want of study than would be believed. If you are in business study how you can manage it, so as to

compass as many of the higher ends which a soul should be seeking as may be possible. Do not inherit or borrow methods; do not put up with a great deal which does not satisfy you, because you suppose it cannot be mended. Study it; pray over it, make it your daily meditation, "how may I conduct the affairs of life so as to save my soul by them, not save my soul *from* them, but make them the means daily of promoting its elevation and education." A man must study for the counting-house, study for the bar, study for the church, the hospitals, the army, and think you there is no need of studying for heaven? Remember you are a student for that career life long, and must meditate prayerfully daily, how daily life may be made the theatre of spiritual achievement and success. Many for want of study live a disjointed shambling sort of life. They never examine the days, they never correct faults, deplore failures, and link day to day by wise resolution and persevering toil. Thought is the fly-wheel which maintains the machine of life in harmonious and balanced motion. Therefore *Study to shew thyself approved unto God*. Many would say make God's glory your end, if you would be approved of Him. Surely God's glory will be the end of all that is right and good. But I think that a good deal of weak thought and weak life is often covered under the vague term, "*Do all for the glory of God.*" We have, I think, simply to be faithful servants, and leave Him to care for His glory. The sun glorifies Him in fulfilling His commands. All that serves Him is manifestly glorious and glorifying. Ask simply "*what wilt thou have me to do,*" and do it, and be sure that your life will shine with a glory with which the servant angels shine not, and will speak in tones beyond the compass of even the heavenly creature, the praises of your King. *Study to show thyself approved unto God*; or, as St. Peter exhorts—" *And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to*

virtue knowledge ; And to knowledge temperance ; and to temperance patience ; and to patience godliness ; And to godliness brotherly kindness ; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure : for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall : For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. (2 Peter i, 5—11.)

III. The blessed result.

This is the only guarantee of thoroughness in work. No man will do his best, but he who knows that God expects his best. The man who yokes himself to his work as the Lord's servant, is the man who can do it nobly, and fruitfully to himself and to mankind. Sum up the lives of the world's chief benefactors, and tell me how many of them have wrought on alone, in darkness, far ahead of the daylight of the common world, lonely pioneers in the backwoods of time, sustained simply by the thought, "This is my Lord's work and it must be done." This sustained Livingstone in his dreary African desert ; this sustained Elisha Kane in his Franklin search, in one of the most desperate hand to hand conflicts with peril and death which has ever been fought in this world. Livingstone is gone back to his African mission, and I know this sustains and leads him on ; "may I but say, *I have fought the good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith ; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness that fadeth not away.*" The only hope for man's life against the tricky and tinsel character of the present generation, in which every man

by advertisements, by shouting, by tomfoolery, or any how, is trying to crane his neck above his fellows, and show himself, if only for a moment, before the world—I say, the only hope for man's life lies in the assurance that the number is daily multiplying of those who have taken up the burden of life in the spirit of God's servants, and taught themselves to believe that their mission is not to be popular ministers, tricky artists, taking writers, or successful merchants, but faithful, honest, God-fearing men and women, in whatever calling God has placed them—men and women who believe in God, who believe in righteousness, who believe in the company of saints and angels who watch their warfare, who believe in the Amen of heaven. And work done thus has a glory which is all its own, a glory before which your tinsel success looks like a rush-light in the face of the sun. This world yields nothing comparable for a moment to the joy of the man who has fought in his worldly business a spiritual battle and gained a spiritual victory. The man who has conquered a vice or meanness, helped the weak, or saved the poor, is the man whose success the angels envy. Into these things, the mysteries of freedom, they desire to look; not one of those bright spirits but would joyfully bear your pangs and denials, might he but taste the rapture of your triumph, and clothe himself at last in the brightness of your glory. Show thyself to God each night. Have no secrets from Him. Throw open the inner chambers to His entrance—the secret ledger to His eye; and hear Him say, as He giveth His beloved sleep, “well done, good and faithful servant,” and you have a portion which you would be a fool to change for the empire of ten thousand worlds.

It is the one thing that can save you from the agony of spirit, and the waste of energy which is involved in the remorse in which every other course must issue. What wealth of energy, of life, is spent on earth in the simple experience of

remorse. Sooner or later God's measures, the ways of life which He approves, will be seen to be the right ones. God grant that for you it may not be too late. Spare yourselves an awakening which at best can leave but a shred of your native pith and manhood to be spent on Him. The first fresh vigour of the spirit, the fire of its youth, once wasted, can never be recalled. Baptise it to immortal strength and freshness by yielding it as a servant to Him. Have Him to appeal to amidst all the injustice, wrongs, malignities of earth—be able to commit your cause to Him that judgeth righteously beyond the stars, and who will one day bring forth your righteousness as the light, and your judgment as the noon day, to shine on undimmed for ever. Be prepared to be wronged, maligned, evil spoken of, for your best deeds, your best gifts to the world. But what harm, if God approves you? His voice could be heard through the thunders of a world in arms against you; in the stillness of the deep dungeon His whisper, like a gush of celestial music, would break upon your ear." "*Where is the fury of the oppressor?*" to the man whom God is sustaining? "*Who is he that shall harm you if ye be followers of that which is good?*" I wish you would taste once the sweetness of this conviction, "God approves me." You would sell it no more for all the world's gold-heaps or shouts of applause. It has a present satisfaction, strength, glorious joy, which are unspeakable, and it heralds a "well done" before the assembled universe, when the dooms and destinies of eternity are hanging on the sentence of the Judge. "*We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ.*" There all your successes will be weighed again in the eternal balances, and all your schemes will be finally reviewed. And, then, how many of your merchant-princes will be torn by exulting fiends from the gold-heaps in which they have sought to hide themselves "*from him that sitteth on the throne,*" and from the Lamb, to stand up before

Christ the confessed beggars and outcasts of the universe for eternity. And then every noble work will be crowned with Christ's benediction; every tear that has been shed, every sigh that has been breathed, in this dread spiritual conflict will be mightily repaid. I see a great company that no man can number, wending as in triumph to the gate of the heavenly city, to the palace of the Eternal King. I knew them on earth, you knew them, as the tear-stained, the toil worn, the humble hearted, the faithful, of their own generation; the world's pity, jest, or scorn, while they trod life's pathways, but there the glory of the universe, the elders of eternity. Study to present thyself at last amongst them. Balance all losses, heart-aches, scorns, and wrongs, by the glory of the moment when the Lord from the midst of the throne shall greet you with the last "WELL DONE." "THOU HAST BEEN FAITHFUL IN FEW THINGS, I WILL MAKE THEE RULER OVER MANY THINGS, ENTER INTO THE JOY OF THY LORD."

AIDS TO THE DEVELOPMENT
OF THE
DIVINE LIFE.

BY THE
REV. J. BALDWIN BROWN, B.A.

No. XII.

DANIEL AT NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S COURT.

"But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank: therefore he requested of the prince of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself." (Daniel i, 8.)

DANIEL and Joseph are the two men in whom the character and capacity of the Jewish race stand out with peculiar prominence; and who, moreover, did in a measure the work which God called the Jews to do for the world. Daniel and Joseph were missionaries to the heathen, as the whole Jewish nation was intended to be; and they produced by the combined influence of their wisdom and piety a profound effect upon the minds of the highest and most despotic monarchs in the world, and upon the policy of their reigns. Not willing missionaries altogether—each of them was carried as a captive into the land in which he was to bear witness for God. But when there, each of them

took up his testimony with singular clearness and honesty, and compelled from heathendom an attention to God's truth, which is altogether unparalleled in missionary history. I do not profess a full acquaintance with the records of missionary enterprise, but I have read a good deal about it, and I never read anything like this. The first monarch of the world, moved solely by Daniel's influence on his mind, writing to all peoples thus—"Then king Darius wrote unto all people, nations, and languages, that dwell in all the earth; Peace be multiplied unto you. I make a decree, That in every dominion of my kingdom men tremble and fear before the God of Daniel: for he is the living God, and stedfast for ever, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed, and his dominion shall be even unto the end. He delivereth and rescueth, and he worketh signs and wonders in heaven and in earth, who hath delivered Daniel from the power of the lions." (Daniel vi, 25—27.) Joseph produced a similar impression upon Pharaoh—"And Pharaoh said unto his servants, Can we find such a one as this is, a man in whom the Spirit of God is? And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, Forasmuch as God hath shewed thee all this, there is none so discreet and wise as thou art: Thou shalt be over my house, and according unto thy word shall all my people be ruled: only in the throne will I be greater than thou. And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, See, I have set thee over all the land of Egypt. And Pharaoh took off his ring from his hand, and put it upon Joseph's hand, and arrayed him in vestures of fine linen, and put a gold chain about his neck; And he made him to ride in the second chariot which he had; and they cried before him, Bow the knee: and he made him ruler over all the land of Egypt. And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, I am Pharaoh, and without thee shall no man lift up his hand or foot in all the land of Egypt." (Genesis xli, 38—44.) Men speak and think of Judaism as an exclusive and selfish thing. The Jews made it so. But who does not

pride himself on his faculty and possessions until humbled, and taught that all he holds, he holds as a steward under the Lord. But I can find no trace that God intended it to be so, in the Mosaic law or the Jewish history. The laws of Moses speak most tenderly of the stranger, as long as he made no attempt to be preacher of a poorer and falser faith—then they are stern and pitiless as death. But the stranger was to share their festivals, to partake of their bounty, and to be admitted freely, if he would share their spiritual conditions, into all the arcana of their religious life. God lit up a lamp for the oriental nations, when He set up the Jews in the land of Canaan. Every nation was to see by the light of it how to walk in wise ordinances and statutes of national life. The Jews made it a dark lanthorn, they fitted dark slides to it, they made it useless to others, and at last, of course, as a natural consequence, useless to themselves. The man who fails to fulfil his mission to others, fails to find the end and meaning of his own life. Cease to do good, and you will soon cease to be good, and will make shipwreck of your personal hope. The Jews were God's witnesses of this. Instead of making all nations love them, and seek to walk in the light of their life as a people, they managed to make all nations hate and persecute them—with a hatred, moreover, that deepened with the ages, and at length wrought their utter ruin. You may say that this was the inevitable result of the position of a godly people in the midst of a heathen world. At first it might be so, but not permanently. Christianity has won its way, first to toleration, then to honour; Judaism never did; and yet the peoples around were far from indisposed to receive its impressions. Joseph won his way at once at Memphis, Daniel at Babylon. And Joseph and Daniel had nothing but what Judaism had. They were Jews to the heart's core; and the history of their missionary work stands in everlasting record to shame their

countrymen, and to justify the ways of God, when "the wind bound up the self-centred and exclusive people in her wings," and bore them into a far captivity, where, unless they were prepared to renounce their nationality, they must bear witness for God, whether they would or no.

The likeness between Joseph and Daniel, even in the details of their history, and influence on society, is quite remarkable. Let me beg of you to examine it at large. Consider these two passages just as specimens—"And Joseph was brought down to Egypt; and Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, captain of the guard, an Egyptian, bought him of the hands of the Ishmeelites, which had brought him down thither. And the Lord was with Joseph, and he was a prosperous man; and he was in the house of his master the Egyptian. And his master saw that the Lord was with him, and that the Lord made all that he did to prosper in his hand. And Joseph found grace in his sight, and he served him: and he made him overseer over his house, and all that he had he put into his hand. And it came to pass from the time that he had made him overseer in his house, and over all that he had, that the Lord blessed the Egyptian's house for Joseph's sake; and the blessing of the Lord was upon all that he had in the house, and in the field. And he left all that he had in Joseph's hand; and he knew not ought he had, save the bread which he did eat. And Joseph was a goodly person, and well favoured." (Genesis xxxix, 1—6.)—"And it came to pass in the morning that his spirit was troubled; and he sent and called for all the magicians of Egypt, and all the wise men thereof: and Pharaoh told them his dream; but there was none that could interpret them unto Pharaoh. Then spake the chief butler unto Pharaoh, saying, I do remember my faults this day: Pharaoh was wroth with his servants, and put me in ward in the captain of the guard's house, both me and the chief baker: And we dreamed a dream in one night, I and he; we dreamed each man according

to the interpretation of his dream. And there was there with us a young man, an Hebrew, servant to the captain of the guard; and we told him, and he interpreted to us our dreams; to each man according to his dream he did interpret. And it came to pass, as he interpreted to us, so it was; me he restored unto mine office, and him he hanged. Then Pharaoh sent and called Joseph, and they brought him hastily out of the dungeon: and he shaved himself, and changed his raiment, and came in unto Pharaoh. And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, I have dreamed a dream, and there is none that can interpret it: and I have heard say of thee, that thou canst understand a dream to interpret it. And Joseph answered Pharaoh, saying, It is not in me: God shall give Pharaoh an answer of peace." (Genesis xli, 8—16.)

And the decree went forth that the wise men should be slain; and they sought Daniel and his fellows to be slain. Then Daniel answered with counsel and wisdom to Arioch the captain of the king's guard, which was gone forth to slay the wise men of Babylon; He answered and said to Arioch the king's captain, Why is the decree so hasty from the king? Then Arioch made the thing known to Daniel. Then Daniel went in, and desired of the king that he would give him time, and that he would shew the king the interpretation. Then Daniel went to his house, and made the thing known to Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, his companions: That they would desire mercies of the God of heaven concerning this secret; that Daniel and his fellows should not perish with the rest of the wise men of Babylon. Then was the secret revealed unto Daniel in a night vision. Then Daniel blessed the God of heaven. Daniel answered and said, Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever: for wisdom and might are his: And he changeth the times and the seasons: he removeth kings, and setteth up kings: he giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding: He revealeth the deep and secret things: he knoweth what is in the darkness, and

the light dwelleth with him. I thank thee, and praise thee, O thou God of my fathers, who hast given me wisdom and might, and hast made known unto me now what we desired of thee: for thou hast now made known unto us the king's matter. Therefore Daniel went in unto Arioch, whom the king had ordained to destroy the wise men of Babylon: he went and said thus unto him; Destroy not the wise men of Babylon: bring me in before the king, and I will shew unto the king the interpretation. Then Arioch brought in Daniel before the king in haste, and said thus unto him, I have found a man of the captives of Judah, that will make known unto the king the interpretation. The king answered and said unto Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar, Art thou able to make known unto me the dream which I have seen, and the interpretation thereof? Daniel answered in the presence of the king, and said, The secret which the king hath demanded cannot the wise men, the astrologers, the magicians, the soothsayers, shew unto the king; But there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets, and maketh known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days. Thy dream, and the visions of thy head upon thy bed, are these." (Daniel ii, 13—28.) They were both men, like most Jews, of immense capacity for business, men of the highest genius, manifest in childhood; yet, as is the case with all men of the highest genius, with singular adaptation for the management of affairs. Bernard, Dante, Shakspeare, Milton, are such men as I mean—men whose lives stand in everlasting refutation of the shallow sneer that there is something essentially inconsistent between genius and the dry, dull business of life. The men of the loftiest genius have ever been the most capable men in the management of the things of this life. You doubt it perhaps. Shakspeare is generally regarded as an instance to the contrary; a poor, strolling, vagabond player, too full of genius to do anything successful, is the common notion of him. The truth is that Shakspeare

is the only actor probably of his day, who made his profession pay. He alone, of all his great peers—and they “*were giants on earth in those days*”—made a moderate fortune by his management, and settled, in an early prime, in his native town, upon the competency which his talent and industry as a manager had won. Daniel is a great biblical instance of this. In him shine out the clear and manifold intelligence, the tenacious purpose, the unconquerable patience, and the personal power over persons—a kind of fascination in its highest form—which are characteristic of his race. It was this which made them, in the apostolic age, the only people whom the Romans really dreaded and honoured with their hatred; a hate and a dread which the middle ages have perpetuated and handed down to our own times. Study the lives of Joseph and Daniel, if you wish to understand Judaism; they only grasped and wielded the power which God had put into it, to enlighten, to purify, and to save, all the nations of the heathen world.

I wish to draw from this passage some practical lessons about life and its conduct, and I beg you to observe:

I. The respect which honest and open minds, even worldly or heathen minds, cannot help entertaining for spiritual principle and power.

Nebuchadnezzar was a man of imperial capacity. We know but little of him, either through sacred or profane history; but what we do know leads to the conviction that he was one of those rare men who are born for imperial rule. He was a man not unmindful of the duties of a ruler as well as the enjoyments; a man reverent, too, and pious towards the only gods he had ever heard of, or, before he came across the greater spirit of Daniel, had a chance of knowing. He had conquered the Jews with difficulty, for no nation ever won an advantage over them without tremendous cost; but when he had con-

quered them, he began to think he could turn them to use. The selection of youths which he made to be trained for the public service, and the singular attention he shewed them—
“*And the king spake unto Ashpenaz the master of his eunuchs, that he should bring certain of the children of Israel, and of the king's seed, and of the princes; Children in whom was no blemish, but well favoured, and skilful in all wisdom, and cunning in knowledge, and understanding science, and such as had ability in them to stand in the king's palace, and whom they might teach the learning and the tongue of the Chaldeans. And the king appointed them a daily provision of the king's meat, and of the wine which he drank: so nourishing them three years, that at the end thereof they might stand before the king.*” (Daniel i, 3, 4, 5.)—I say this was something beyond the ordinary habit of an eastern monarch, to train captive youths to occupy places about his person and court. Evidently he had great hope of these Jewish children, and looked for large service from them; and as evidently it was the reputation of the nation which had inspired it, and which prepared him for the influence which Daniel was to exert both on his empire and on his heart. Nor was Nebuchadnezzar singular in this. Cyrus, one of the world's great kings, had the same reverence for the Jewish people. Alexander, be the cause what it may, treated the Jews, poor and weak as they were in his day, with a clemency, with a respect, which no other eastern people inspired. Antiochus the Great, and Ptolemy Soter, shared this universal impression about the superiority of the Jewish people, and their capacity for intellectual and political service; but none of them saw, what it is given to us to discern, that this character of the people which commanded the world's chief commanders, was based upon their knowledge of and intercourse with the living God. God gave them that strange commanding power. They *knew* what the world was *feeling after*. They had been nourished

by the bread of life to the full stature of a people; and they held forth a powerful attraction to all who had life enough in them to desire to BE and to GROW. Let us do justice to the virtues of a heathen mind. Nebuchadnezzar sought light for himself and for his people; and no narrow prejudice was suffered to shut it out from him. His distinguished consideration for the Hebrew captive children, shows that he was a seeker of wisdom, of guidance, could any man show it him; a type of how many poor heathen outcasts, publicans, harlots, prodigals, whom we thrust out of our synagogues, because they are too honest and single-hearted to affect the decencies and formalities, while they feel they are destitute of the life, of our moralities and beliefs. But the one great secret of power, of living and lasting power, is godliness. The man who is known to live with God, to be acquainted with Him, to be possessed in soul as well as profession with the principles of the Bible, is the man who lays the basis of the most powerful and lasting influence which a man can exercise on his fellow-man. The man who leaves this memory behind him, leaves the most precious legacy which a man can leave to his children. Who would change the power of such a man as Arnold for a sceptre? What stores of gold can be so precious to his children as his name? Godliness, when you can find it, is profitable for this world. If the best of this world be a fortune, then the assertion is daily confuted; but if the best of this world is an honoured name, a smile and a blessing from every one, full security against want and wearing care, and a noble legacy to leave your children, which shall stand them in better stead than piles of gold, get godliness up to the mark of Daniel's, and you have it all.

II. Daniel's way of getting and doing good was other and higher than the king's.

Poor Nebuchadnezzar had no higher notion of the way to foster the growth of mind and character than to feed it daintily. A portion of meat and wine from the king's table was the great expression of the good will of the king. And let us not despise him, while we are guilty of the same. I wish I could tell you how many times a year my soul is grieved to see some bright young child, capable of feeling something of the moral glow of goodness, rewarded for some good deed or some clever word by a tit-bit at table, establishing a connection which, perhaps, is not broken through life, between jam and virtue, a bit more pudding and a cheerful countenance, submission to authority and dainty food. It is one of the most grievous wrongs which you can do to your children, to suffer even the most transient connection to be established between moral acts and the pampering of the appetite. The coaxing of a child to be quiet or to be good by something nice, means coaxing it early to be selfish, lustful, dependent, and gluttonous through life; it is like plunging a hardy young plant, which only asks light and air enough, into a dung-heap, forcing it into gross and sickly precocity and premature decay.

Daniel knew that mind and character had to be fed, HE fed them on the bread of God.

"But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank: therefore he requested of the prince of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself." I believe this to be one of the wisest resolutions ever taken by a young man in this world. I shall endeavour to set forth the grounds on which I conceive it to rest. They are plainly these:

1. Ceremonial; 2. Physical; and 3. Moral.

1. Ceremonial. This will need but few words. We are not under a "*touch not, taste not, handle not*" gospel; nor, let

me add, in a "*touch not, taste not, handle not*" climate. Ceremonial defilements fill a large place in the Mosaic books, and in the religions of all eastern peoples. The Brahmin of to-day is as rigid about food, dress, and contact, as were his ancestors 3000 years ago, or as was Daniel at Babylon. We, Englishmen and Independents, are very apt to indulge a sneer at this; but it is better to treat seriously, even solemnly, a matter which exercises such an influence upon human minds. The Jew of old, the Brahmin now, would rather die than eat certain food, or do, to us, quite unimportant and harmless acts. Religion has consecrated certain abstinences and made them the terms of salvation. But, in nine cases out of ten, those very abstinences are enjoined by prudence, and rest on considerations which, in hot climates, are very closely connected with health, perhaps life. There is a natural as well as a religious reason for *most*, I do not say all, ceremonial injunctions of a religious character; and we, who deny the religious importance, must be careful not to lose sight of the natural foundations, of which the devotees themselves may not have the faintest idea. Daniel in this case rigidly kept to his law. The nature and ground of that law is not now in question, it was his law, hallowed by old associations; and among strangers he sought to honour it by express obedience. I do not know whether, as a Jew, he would have incurred any sin by breach of the law in his helpless condition as a captive. But his law was part of the platform by which his highest belief, his highest life, was supported, and he could not afford to dispense with its aids. Very important are associations which have grown round our religious belief; very precious and helpful while vitality is strong, very dangerous and delusive when the life is low in the soul. Like the ivy, they clothe a strong tower with a charm and grace which relieves its hard outlines, and adds something to its stability; like the ivy, too, they hold together in trembling

cohesion many a rotten old fabric which is safer in the dust. Daniel's soul was full of health and vigour. He felt that the old discipline of his country and fathers would brace and tighten the joints of his manhood. Many a man, having lost the living faith of his fathers, would keep up the same discipline and cheat himself into the belief that it was a sign that he was still living to the Lord. How far godly habits, chapel going, singing familiar hymns, uttering familiar words of prayer, and the like, supply the place of living godliness, how much you value them simply because they nourish it, and in so far as they nourish it, answer now to your own conscience before God.

2. Considerations of health.

The word pulse includes vegetable diet generally, and in Chaldea the best diet on which to keep health and be fit for work. The most terrible scourges with which the East is afflicted in the way of disease are the fruit of gross living—eating as well as drinking—perhaps the first most. Men in those climates cannot bear it; students cannot in this. To keep a clear eye, a firm hand, a steady brain, were more to Daniel than pleasures of the palate. I venture to say, that no man has ever greatly distinguished himself whose body was not in firm control. It is not enough to follow nature, and never be excessive; nature wants curbing, and unless young men take their bodies in hand, and compel them sometimes to abstain, and obey the mastery of the will, it is impossible to keep the body in due subjection, and make it the eager and rapid handmaid of the soul. Fasts are good things in youth, simply as a moral discipline; as a man in training for a race abstains from all which might imperil his hope of a prize. The Romanists abuse them to superstitious ends, and the peril of doing so is great; therefore the Protestant churches, wisely, I think, let

them alone. But you *must* master the body ; you *must* make its limbs to move to the music of temperance and chastity ; and there are times when pulse and water will be the fittest nourishment, and leave the spirit free for aspiration, and the mind clear and strong for work.

8. Altogether the highest purpose of his abstinence was moral. He felt himself in a seductive atmosphere. The splendour and luxury of an oriental court are fearfully demoralizing. The rapid demoralization of the oriental royal races, compared with the European, proves this conclusively, even did we not see clearly that it must be so. Daniel felt that a habit of life out of tune with the court-life would be a great safeguard to him—that if he began to yield, even in trifling things, to the court customs, he would be swept into the vortex and hurried away. To save the crown of his spiritual manhood, he set up his bulwarks—things trifling in themselves, but full of moment and interest when we see that a soul is using them as barriers to guard its honour and its life. Not what they are, but what they defend, becomes then the question. They become keys of a position which, if it be lost, a soul is destroyed. This raises an important moral question: the use of things indifferent, of habits, customs, scenes, associations, in guarding the integrity of the moral life. Doubtless, a perfect soul can hold its integrity and battle against all adversaries ; it needs no outwork, no system of defences ; it has within it, like Christ and by Christ, a strength that overcomes the world. But who is so mature in strength and character that he can go anywhere, look on any scene, read any book, enjoy any pleasure, mingle in any associations, and get just the good that God intends him to get out of them, and reject all the evil with which the devil charges even the most perfect and beautiful works of God. Alas ! for one who walks abroad with naked purity to

shield him, ten thousand have to lie behind bulwarks, and to think themselves happy if they can resist the first insidious advances of the foe. These bulwarks are habits, associations, resolutions of abstinence and denial, where the devil may be met and beaten easily; while, if he enters and assails the citadel, it must fall. Every man must study for himself, as Daniel did, the relation of things indifferent in themselves to his own life. One man may adopt a mode of life, allow himself certain pleasures, trust himself in certain places, where another, honestly desirous to live soberly and godly, would not be safe for an hour. Let every man mark what is helpful, what is hurtful, in the thousand indifferent things which he handles, and scenes which he frequents, day by day. And then let him build his bulwarks, and remember that the keeping of that is in most cases the keeping of the soul. Keep the devil at arms' length, and fight him at a distance. Suffer him, in easy security, to draw near, and resistance is over; the citadel of your soul is won. Nine tenths of the gross, degrading, damning sins, into which people are betrayed, are committed without premeditation, nay, with a clear purpose against them; but a man or a woman has toyed with temptation — just thus far I can venture, and stop short of foul and fatal sin. And then, as the poor bird when he sees the bait in the trap, Satan knows he has you fast; he knows that those encroachments are never staid. The art of godly living in its earlier stages is an art of wise defences, a constant, earnest vigilance at the outworks of the spirit, that they may never be stormed or sapped by the foe. Gradually, as a man grows in grace and God-likeness, the outer defence may be abandoned. Paul, the aged, could look steadily in the face many a peril which Paul the neophyte would have wisely shunned. But let the young pilgrim of life beware, and if he feels himself in an atmosphere of temptation, let him raise bulwarks of habits and self-denials by which the

pestilent foe may be kept as far as may be from the near neighbourhood of the soul. The saving of the soul is the one grand object of thought and effort for every man ; I mean the daily saving of it from the snare of Satan and the slough of the flesh. "*For what shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose himself or be castaway.*" Every day you may be losing or saving a bit of its faculty, a pulse of its life. Reckon this nightly as well as your day books—How much of my soul, of myself, has been this day lost or won ? Daniel is one of the rare men who have brought the crown of spiritual manhood undimmed out of the battle—a man who occupies an eminent throne among the royalties of the celestial world. The whole secret is here : here is the hinge of his character, of his eternity. (Prov. vi. 20—23.)

Learn to purpose things in your heart that are noble and godly, and keep covenant with yourself. Learn that you have that within you which neither kings, nor employers, nor syrens, shall rob you of ; for to lose it is to be cast away—cast away on that rock-bound shore on which the waves of death are ever dashing, and on which I see strewn and shattered the wrecks of many a noble and mighty vessel that set forth gallantly on the voyage of life. Beware ! "*Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not to thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths.*" And then God will lift up the head of his faithful servant in the brightness of the celestial world. "*Go thou thy way until the end be : for thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days.*"

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